MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHERS AS EFFECTIVE ADVISORS
STUDENT AND TEACHER PERSPECTIVES

By

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Dedicated

to

Children

who provide the joy in our lives
and our hope for the future

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STUDENT AND TEACHER PERSPECTIVES

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The purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of middle school teachers as advisors from students' and teachers' perspectives in order to understand the characteristics and behaviors that are needed to successfully establish positive advisory relationships between students and their advisor The researcher sought to answer the following research questions

1 How do middle school students describe an effective teacher advisor?

2 How do the students' perceptions of what makes a teacher an effective advisor differ among students of different gender, race, grade level, socioeconomic status, and academic achievement?

3 How do middle school teachers describe effective teacher advisors?

4 How do teachers' descriptions of effective advisors compare and contrast with the descriptions of students?

5 From the students and teachers' perspectives how can the effectiveness of teacher advisors be improved?

The case study research method was used for this study Students and teachers from nine model advisement schools in Florida participated in the study The primary sources of data were written survey instruments completed by 506 middle school students and 85 teacher-advisors and interviews conducted with 123 students and 21 middle school teachers identified by students as effective advisors.

Findings from the survey and interview data supported each other Students were more interested in the teacher advisors' interpersonal characteristics than they were in academic credentials Students wanted an advisor who cares about them listens and tries to help Teacher and student findings were also very similar The data yielded a set of 27 characteristics which were categorized as personal characteristics advisor behaviors and organization of advisement class Twenty-one implications for advisement practice were delineated

One area of difference that remains puzzling is that on survey results subgroups of students (grade gender race achievement level and socioeconomic status) expressed different advisor preferences and varying

degrees of satisfaction with their advisement experiences These findings were not verified in the interview results This remains a prime area for further research on effective advisement

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background

Advisor-advisee programs of various types were first introduced in schools during the 1850s. In some school districts these programs have gradually evolved into sophisticated and organized approaches to schoolwide guidance provided by classroom teachers for all students (Myrick, Highland, & Highland, 1986). According to Lounsbury (1987), former editor of the Middle School Journal, the number of middle schools that have instituted adviser-advisee programs has continued to expand. Alexander and McEwin (1989) reported that 39% of a nationwide random sample of middle level schools had advisement programs. In the state of Florida the percentage of middle school advisement programs is even higher, with an increase from 18% in 1984 to 60% in 1989 (Irvin, 1991). Educators have "instituted middle school advisement programs in order to better serve the nonacademic needs of pupils on a regular basis and also to counter the limited student-teacher relationships inevitable in a subject-driven curriculum" (George, Spreul, and Moorefield, 1987, p. iv). Lounsbury (1987) added that "the contributions of these arrangements, which put a relatively small number of pupils in a special relationship with a teacher and gives them an allotment of time, are enormous and the future development of such programs should be encouraged" (p. 10).

Several recent reports have also confirmed the growing consensus that today's middle level students are in need of an advisory program. It was stated in This We Believe, a publication by the National Middle School Association (1982) that "each transescent learner needs an adult who is in a position to give individual attention. Home base or advisor advisee programs which provide the transescent with regular opportunities for interaction with a small group of peers and a caring adult fill this need" (pp. 12-13). It was reported in An Agenda for Excellence at the Middle Level, published by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (1985) that "schools should institute student advisement programs that assure a student regular, compassionate, supportive counsel from a concerned adult about his or her academic progress, adjustment to school, and personal adjustment" (p. 4). More recently, in Turning Points (Hornbeck, 1989), a report of the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, the authors indicated that

> Every student should be well known by at least one adult. Students should be able to rely on that adult to help learn from their experiences, comprehend physical changes and changing relationships with family and peers, act on their belief to marshal every school and community resource needed for the student to succeed, and help to fashion a promising vision of the future. Small group advisories... enable teachers or other staff to provide guidance and actively monitor the academic and social development of students... and become mentors to and advocates for their student advisees. Advisors would also serve as the primary contact between school and parents. A young person entering a middle grades school... needs to feel a sense of belonging, of being able to form bonds with teachers and classmates and to trust adults. The effect of the advisory system appears to be to reduce alienation of students and to provide each young adolescent with the support of a caring adult who knows that student well. That bond can make student engagement and interest in learning a reality (pp. 40-41).

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of middle school teachers as advisors from students and teachers perspectives In order to understand the characteristics and behaviors that are needed to successfully establish positive advisory relationships between students and their advisor The researcher sought to answer the following research questions

1. How do middle school students describe an effective teacher advisor?
2. How do the students' perceptions of what makes a teacher an effective advisor differ among students of different gender, race grade level socioeconomic status and academic achievement?
3. How do middle school teachers describe effective teacher advisors?
4. How do teachers' descriptions of effective advisors compare and contrast with the descriptions of students?
5. From the students' and teachers' perspectives how can the effectiveness of teacher advisors be improved?

Although the need for advisory programs for transescents is widely recognized by educators such programs are very difficult to initiate and maintain Ultimately the long term success of an advisory program is determined by committed delivery of the program by dedicated staff members But a typical obstacle to successful implementation of advisory programs is a

reluctant teaching staff that lacks ownership or commitment to the advisory program (Gill & Reed 1990)

> Despite the importance of advisory groups in middle school there has been considerable teacher resistance Usually 20% of the teachers quickly embrace the concept 20% are skeptical or clearly negative and are reluctant to be involved The remaining majority are more tentative and are likely to take a noncommittal wait and see attitude (Myrick Highland & Highland 1986 p 15)

Myrick and Myrick (1990) attributed this reluctance to lack of teacher training for the role of advisor James (1986) contended that teacher apathy toward the advisory role occurs because many educators are reluctant to get involved in the lives of learners Many attempts to rectify the problem of teacher resistance have been initiated through teacher inservice training that focuses on students' developmental needs provides facilitative skills training and includes motivational activities Within middle schools various organizational formats have been attempted for the advisement program and reams of teacher directed guidance activities have been developed Nevertheless many middle school teachers continue to express discomfort with the teacher advisor role

Students also may attempt to sabotage an advisement program through criticism and lack of interest if they think their needs are not being met (Myrick & Myrick 1990) The health of an advisement program depends on the value that students attribute to it (Graham & Hawkins 1984) Unfortunately it is uncommon to ask students what they think (Wittmer & Myrick 1989) Doda

(1981) stated that failure to consult students makes it difficult to predict what sort of affective education will be effective with middle schoolers

There is therefore, a need for a link in understanding the perceptions of middle school students and their middle school teacher-advisors about what makes an advisor effective with middle schoolers Middle school teachers need to become aware of what the consumers of their advising think There also is a need to compare and contrast the perceptions of middle school students and of teacher advisors in order to clarify what teacher characteristics and behaviors should be strengthened and what should be modified in order for advisement to be more effective for students

Significance

During a time of limited financial resources for education the Florida legislature has increased funding to support middle school advisement implementation According to E Lawson (personal communication September 1990) of the Florida Department of Education 3 7 million dollars were allocated for model and pilot advisement programs for 1991 Additionally in Florida School Law, Chapter 230 2319 directed that beginning with the 1990 1991 school year each school district eligible to receive Progress in Middle Childhood Education (PRIME) funding must have strategies to implement "a regularly scheduled block of time to provide structured and unstructured small group guidance activities which focus on the social and emotional growth of students schedule planning and career guidance" (p 110) Every school day in this state thousands of middle school students

attend an advisement class Although the need for middle school advisement has been studied and the characteristics of an effective advisement program have been documented almost nothing about effective advisement has been reported from the middle school students' perspective What makes advisement and advisors effective from the students' unique point of view is not known by the professionals who serve as advisors As consumers of advisement programs students can and should be given the opportunity to provide their valuable insight into the matter

Perhaps the most significant implication of this research is that it should provide insights for practitioners who are responsible for implementing teacher-advisor programs into (a) the way middle school students view an effective advisor and (b) the perceptions of other teacher-advisors who have been identified by students as effective advisors Informing teaching practitioners about effective education in the middle school is definitely needed as is reflected by teacher resistance and the difficulty of implementing advisement programs successfully

Results of this study also may be useful in improving the preservice and inservice preparation of middle school teachers for their important role as advisors. With training that is more directly related to student-identified skills the middle school teacher advisor can become more effective and therefore more satisfied in the role of an advisor Students with more effectively trained advisors will benefit from an advisement program that is more relevant in meeting their developmental needs

Middle school administrators and supervisors also could benefit from a deeper understanding of teachers as effective advisors. The findings of this study have implications for hiring, evaluation, and instructional leadership. Research about teacher advisor effectiveness also could provide a focus for school decision makers regarding this essential component of middle level education.

Design of the Study

The case study research method was used for this study. Students and teachers from nine model advisement schools in Florida participated in the research project. (The Department of Education has designated these schools as Model Advisement Schools based on grant applications that described each school's successful advisement program. The model schools were given the responsibility of helping several pilot advisement middle schools develop their advisement programs.) A tenth model advisement school, not included in the research study, was used for a pilot study that consisted of using and evaluating the teacher and student survey and interview instruments developed for the study. The nine model advisement schools included in the research study are located throughout the state and represent various demographic considerations, such as size and location of school and students' ethnicity and socioeconomic status.

According to Merriam (1988), the use of multiple methods is one of the strengths of case study research. Several forms of data collection were used in this study.

1 A random selection of 46 to 79 students in each school from grades 6 7 and 8 completed a survey of the characteristics of an effective advisor If advisement classes were heterogeneously grouped at the model school then three to four classes (depending on the number of students per advisement class) were selected from the class lists to participate in the student survey The survey instrument was developed by the researcher from information gained in a review of literature about advisement and by incorporating feedback obtained during the pilot study

2 Three teams of middle school teachers who serve as advisors at each model school completed a teacher survey Teams were randomly chosen one from each of the sixth seventh and eighth grades

3 A representative group averaging 14 students at each model school participated in small-group (one to ten students per group) semistructured interviews The students interviewed represented the gender race grade level academic achievement (as reflected by mathematics level) and socioeconomic distribution (as reflected in free and reduced lunch lists) of each school Information gained from the survey of 506 middle school students was used to provide a basis for semistructured open ended interview probes The survey data were combined with information on effective teaching facilitative behaviors and advisement literature to provide a sound basis for inquiry into what makes an effective advisor Interviews were recorded on audio tape and written notes were taken by the researcher during the interviews

4 Interviews also were conducted at each school with two to four teachers that students identified as effective advisors in order to understand their views of effective practices and to gain insight into how they viewed their role with advisees Interviews were audio tape recorded and notes were taken by the researcher during the interviews

5 A sheet of demographic information about each school was completed by the model schools advisement coordinator and documents from each model school also were reviewed to provide an understanding of how each advisement program is structured

Because this was a descriptive case study inductive analysis of data continued throughout all phases of the study Merriam (1988) has stated that the more supporting descriptions are grounded in the findings the more credible and trustworthy are the conclusions Thick rich descriptions were used to support the development of inferences derived from the data A narrative account of the findings followed from the analysis and conclusions and recommendations for practice were offered to complete the study

Limitations

Several limitations of the study need to be taken into account for they could affect the conclusions and inferences drawn from the study They are indicated in the following sections

Researcher Bias

Although the researcher believes that advisement is an essential component in an effective middle school she did not carry into the study

preconceived ideas about what students or teachers think is an effective teacher as advisor. The researcher, a middle school educator, had no previous contact with the students or teachers from the particular model schools under study.

Student and Teacher Concerns

The interview is an important component of case study and an essential source of evidence (Yin, 1989). Students and teachers may have been apprehensive about participating in a study because of concerns about how the information would be used. Teachers also may have been socially uneasy about the interviewing process. Students might have been reluctant to share openly with an unknown adult. Both groups also may have believed it was necessary to share only positive views in order to convey a favorable message about their middle schools.

The researcher's training and experience as a middle school counselor facilitated the interviewing process. Merriam (1988) warned that a skilled interviewer who is nonjudgemental, sensitive to verbal and nonverbal messages, and a reflective listener is extremely important to the quantity and quality of the information obtained. Additionally, because these students and teachers were in a model advisement school, they have been exposed to visiting adults in their advisement classes and may have been asked about their views of advisement. The researcher was sensitive to and aware of student and teacher inhibitions and their possible reluctance to sharing honest feelings about advisors. The researcher also was flexible in adjusting the

interview questions appropriately The confidentiality of all participants has been protected no one is identified by real name In addition all participants and a parent or guardian of the students gave informed consent to be studied before the interview process began

Data Collection and Analysis

All information was collected and transcribed so that each contribution could be included in the analysis Tape recordings and note taking may not have been sufficient to capture all the subtle communications of active middle schoolers and their teachers but the data have been recorded and transcribed as accurately as possible

The survey instrument was constructed by the researcher Although it was reviewed by several experts in the field and used in a pilot study it has not been validated statistically

For students to participate in an interviewing session each student was required to have written parental permission Perhaps students with substantial negative feelings about advisors or advisement did not return permission forms and therefore were ineligible to be interviewed

Generalizability

Like all qualitative inquiries the ability to generate information of use in similar situations is of concern Merriam (1988) stated that the case study researcher can improve the generalizability of findings by providing a thorough description of the case describing how the case is typical of other cases in similar situations and by conducting a cross-site or cross-case analysis All of

these suggestions were followed when planning the case study Several sites wereused in this study and thorough descriptions are provided of each school and its advisement program This study does not attempt to generalize these students' and teachers' views of effective advisors beyond the nine schools that were studied However characteristics that emerged from an analysis of the data could provide a basis for further qualitative or quantitative research One important aspect of this study is that the information describing effective advisors was provided by the advisees who are the consumers of the advisement program and by advisors who have been identified by students as effective teacher-advisors The information gained in the early interviews was verified in later interview sessions with other participants The insights can provide valuable information for advisors to consider in their own self-evaluations and/or to attempt to verify in dialogues with their advisees

Terms

As they are used in this study the following terms have specific meanings

Advisement (advisor/advisee homebase homeroom advisory A/A teacher guidance, small group advisory and so on) is a structural attempt to provide a daily time for students to develop personal and interpersonal skills and to build warm and open human relationships between middle school teachers and small groups (15 to 30) of middle school student advisees through meeting regularly for specific guidance type activities

Advisor is a teacher who focuses on the instructional end of the guidance continuum on those guidance functions that do not require specialized professional training Advisors help students on an ongoing basis with such things as academic program planning career/college information school adjustment and personal-social guidance Advisors help students recognize their unique talents and interests and plan their academic schedules accordingly They alert students to their strengths and weaknesses and help them set goals Advisors serve as the primary in-school contact for all persons and agencies concerned with students. In middle schools advisors conduct lessons on topics such as getting along with others decision making and study skills The main role of the teacher advisor wrote Keefe (1986) is to get to know advisees as friends.

Effective advisors are teacher advisors who are considered as good advisors from the middle school students' points of view They are advisors who students think meet the role of advisor as friend advocate and caring adult or in other ways that students think are desirable

The goal of advisory programs is for each student in the school to have at least one adult who knows him or her well and who has a special responsibility for the individual student's academic and personal welfare (Vars, 1989)

Positive relationships are relationships between the teacher advisor and advisee that make this adult a person who is significant and important to the student

Transescents (early adolescents young adolescents prepubescents preadolescents middle schoolers) are youngsters who are in the 10 to 14 year old-age range and often in sixth to eighth grades and who are in a developmental stage of progress toward or through puberty The word transescent was introduced by Donald Eichorn in 1966 to describe this unique stage of development when a young person is in transition from childhood into adolescence (George & Lawrence 1982)

Organization of the Study

The details of this research are discussed in the remaining chapters Chapter II reviews literature relevant to the study Chapter III describes details of the methodology and research procedures used in conducting the research including information on data collection and analysis site and sample selection research procedures and validity reliability and ethical concerns Chapter IV gives descriptive details of each model school and the survey findings of this investigation from both students and teachers perspectives Chapter V gives details of the student and teacher interview findings Chapter VI contains a summary draws conclusions and gives recommendations for practice

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Middle Schools

The junior high school which began in 1909 was designed to bridge the gap between elementary and high school by offering a more interesting curriculum with exploratory courses and a less childlike environment Students were expected to stay in school longer with compulsory attendance age extended to 14 In 1911 G Stanley Hall described the chief function of junior high school as a help to the family church and community in guiding children through the early adolescent period (Overly, Kinghorn, & Preston, 1972) The growth of junior high schools was rather remarkable and by 1960 approximately 60% of high school graduates had attended an elementary-junior senior high school (Alexander & McEwin 1989 p 1)

By 1960, however, there also was dissatisfaction with the junior high school because it had become so much like the senior high school in both social and academic areas "Student interests feelings and emotions received little attention at this school" (Overly et al , 1972 p 19) Because of the dissatisfaction with junior highs the organization of middle schools began in the late 1950s and early 1960s and there has continued to be a strong movement toward the fifth or sixth grade through eighth grade middle schools ever since

(Alexander & McEwin 1989) According to Overly et al (1972) "the middle school organization provided a concentrated effort to meet the special growth and developmental needs of youth from 10 to 14 years old" (p 20) The 1968 and 1988 surveys collected by Alexander and McEwin also listed several reasons for the creation of middle schools In 1988 the most frequent reason was to eliminate overcrowding this being the number three reason in 1968 To provide a program specifically designed for children in this age group was the number one reason for beginning a middle school in 1988 but number two in 1968 In 1988 the number two reason for establishment of middle schools was to provide a bridge for students between the elementary and high schools. The reasons given in the more recent survey seem to indicate a trend toward attempting to meet student needs through the middle school organization (Alexander & McEwin 1989)

The National Middle School Association's (1982) definition of a middle school is an "educational response to the needs and characteristics of youngsters during transescence and as such deals with the full range of intellectual and developmental needs" (p 9) The National Middle School Association (NMSA) lists these 10 essential elements of a "true" middle school (a) educators who are knowledgeable about and committed to transescents (b) a balanced curriculum based on transescent needs (c) a range of organizational arrangements (d) varied instructional strategies (e) a full exploratory program (f) comprehensive advising and counseling (g)

continuous progress for students (h) evaluation procedures compatible with nature of transescants, (i) cooperative planning and (j) positive school climate

Brown (1991) listed 21 key ingredients of a middle school including several which specifically address the affective needs of middle school students (a) experiences and guidance to help develop social skills and self -confidence (b) individualized guidance services by counselor or teacher (c) individualized instruction to meet diverse needs, (d) home-base guidance program and (e) help in sorting out values These and the other 16 ingredients were validated by 15 experts in middle school education from eight different states

Lounsbury Marani and Compton (1980) added another dimension to the definition of middle schools and listed just three components which characterize an effective middle school (a) instructional programs which are responsive to values objectives and needs of society as well as the needs of young adolescents (b) instructional strategies and materials individualized and personalized for each student's needs and (c) relationship interactions designed to strengthen adolescent's social and self-awareness.

Doda George and McEwin (1987) stated that middle schools that are effective for early adolescents in today s social milieu are quite different from such schools a few decades ago Effective middle schools work to reduce the size of groups to which students belong and the schools are more similar to elementary than high schools. Middle schools make it possible for teachers and

students to spend time together in noninstructional ways The teachers have a sense of humor and work to "weasel their way into their students hearts" (p 5) These authors concluded that "what works today has less to do with modern technology and sophisticated curriculum plans than it does with the person of the teacher and how students experience that teacher on a daily basis" (p 5)

Gibson (1976) described the major difference between the junior high and middle school as a shift of emphasis in several areas from the child as an individual to prepare for high school to the child as an individual who is experiencing a unique developmental stage with a changing body changing interests and changing personal relationships Operationally the shift is from rigid requirements and scheduling to organizational flexibility within an environment that is sensitive to changing needs There is a shift in emphasis from a subject-driven curriculum to a child-centered curriculum that emphasizes utilization of knowledge Finally there is an underlying emphasis on the need to strengthen the self concept of the student "This challenging task of improving self-concept of the individual is viewed by many authorities as the very cornerstone of the overall structural and philosophical shift" toward middle schools (p 18) One organizational component used in many middle schools to address this challenging task is an advisor/advisee program

Jackson and Hornbeck (1989) concluded that the need for appropriate middle grades education now is urgent because of the changes in American economy the demographics of the nation's children and the risks facing young

people today. The middle school is one of the key socializing institutions for young adolescents, and as such it is a critical turning point in the lives of American students (Jackson & Hornbeck, 1989). "The challenge of middle school education, then, is to develop an educational program that is based on the needs and characteristics of a most diverse and varied population" (NMSA, 1982, p. 3).

Middle School Students

"A key element in effective middle level education is meeting diverse individual student needs. It would be a mistake to underestimate the complexity of such a task, and an equal mistake to believe the task is impossible" (Thornburg, 1982, p. 271). Schools often tend to focus on the intellectual needs of youngsters, while attempting to ignore the physical and social developmental needs. The adolescent's physical, intellectual, social, and behavioral development come together and "interact in a highly impacted time frame resulting in middle school educators encountering more aware, complex, and behaviorally diverse students than we have ever seen before" (Thornburg, 1982, p. 272).

Physical Development

Thirteen years old is the age of greatest variability in physical size and physiological development (McEwin & Thomason, 1989). The average height gain between 10 and 15 years of age is 10 to 20 inches, and weight gain is 40 to 50 pounds. The hardening of the tail bone makes sitting difficult. Irregular

secretions of adrenalin contribute to alternating restlessness and fatigue. Sexual development varies widely (VanHoose & Strahen 1988). Wide differences in prepubertal and pubescent stages is of intense concern to many students. Peterson (1987) reported that maturing earlier or later affected adolescent satisfaction with their appearances and body images. Early maturing boys and later maturing girls tended to be most satisfied with themselves. It becomes important for transescents to understand the physical changes occurring and to be aware that variance in growth rates is normal and not symptomatic of problems (Thornburg 1966).

Uneven bone and muscle growth contribute to poor coordination during rapid growth spurts. The disproportionate changes in height and weight also contribute to awkwardness in previously coordinated youngsters and may adversely affect self esteem. Daily needs for release of energy and nutritional snack breaks characterize this age group. Sensitivity over appearances and peer pressure to conform to the current fads are additional issues of concern for transescents (NMSA 1982).

Intellectual Development

Thornburg (1982) stated that early adolescents today know more and bring more knowledge into the classroom than previous generations. This knowledge needs to be clarified and completed by organizing knowledge and concepts into problem-solving strategies. The ability to use these problem-solving strategies then depends on being able to generalize. But early

adolescents usually do not think about larger issues and when they do their reflections tend to be personal and immediate rather than abstract and general They are mostly concrete learners and have not yet mastered the Piagetian concepts of formal operations. According to Toepfer (cited in McEwin & Thomason 1969) "no more than 1% of 10 year olds 5% of 11 year olds 12% of 12 year olds and 14% of 13 and 14 year olds have the capacity to even initiate formal operations" (p 4) Epstein's data on brain growth periodization have added to the understanding of transescent thinking

> The early stages of transescence (ages 10 to 12 years) are usually characterized by successes in initiating new and higher level cognitive processes because of the brain growth spurt experienced by as much as 85% to 90% of youngsters at this time A similar percentage of 12 to 14 year olds may experience problems if expectations for continued development of higher thinking skills are held when a plateau in brain growth exists (NMSA 1982 p 7)

Bruner (cited in Reinhartz & Beach 1983) suggests the use of iconic teaching methods using visual modes to illustrate concepts and principles being studied and spiraling the learning by returning repeatedly to the same concepts and topics at higher levels of complexity and in greater depth Students need to be taught the new language and thought processes necessary to think more abstractly (Thornburg 1986) Transescents learn mostly in concrete ways by doing trying out new ideas and sharing ideas with peers and adults They are basically egocentric and have difficulty reasoning from points of view outside their own experiences (McEwin & Thomason 1969)

Transescent learners display a wide range of skills interests abilities and curiosities along with shorter attention spans "In their search for identity and a personality learners seek to understand the meaning and enigmas of life from many aspects intellectual philosophical biological, sociological moral and ethical" perspectives (NMSA 1982) A major focus for middle school academics is realistic learning expectations and personally meaningful learning experiences

Social-Emotional Development

Transescents are learning new social and sex roles As they broaden their base of affiliation middle school students are exposed to diverse adult and peer role models This causes conflicts and anxieties as values are questioned and new behaviors are tried (Thornburg 1986) Middle school students are in Erikson's developmental stages of industry versus inferiority and identity versus role confusion During the latter stages of industry versus inferiority youngsters are learning to integrate past experiences and future expectations into a new sense of self Teachers can help students to understand themselves in terms of what they have been and what they might become During the early stages of identity versus role confusion early adolescents are learning to classify sex roles develop personal competence obtain success and achievement understand bodily changes experience acceptance or rejection by peer groups, and identify with adult role models (Reinhartz & Beach 1983) "Learning to accept and be accepted by others is a vital task in early adolescence" (McEwin

& Thomason 1989 p 6) "Individuality is surrendered in a desire to be accepted Transescent group loyalty carries out group will with indifference and sometimes cruelty to outsiders" (NMSA 1982 p 6) "The fear of being ostracized or ridiculed by peers is a powerful force and at times yields such influence that early adolescents may compromise their own personal convictions rather than go against the peer group" (McEwin & Thomason 1989 p 6) Transescents will also work hard to achieve social rewards Petersen (1987) reported that academically successful seventh grade girls were particularly likely to report poor self-images or depressive symptoms. These girls often lowered their academic achievement in eighth through twelfth grade in order to improve their popularity

Although family allegiances diminish as peer identification becomes stronger, transescents still have a continuing need for adult acceptance, even though they do reserve the right to reject adult suggestions Adult criticism is not easily tolerated They seek independence while needing adult reassurance and direction (NMSA 1982)

Early adolescents are also beginning to deal with issues in "shades of gray" rather than merely black and white choices Conflicts are created as transescents question adult values and behaviors, themselves and the ideals of society Classrooms can be places where students discuss moral dilemmas of interest to them in order to clarify the dilemmas and perhaps raise their levels of moral reasoning (Reinhartz & Beach 1983)

Transescents desire attention are subject to emotional outbursts have exaggerated responses to anything with sexual implications, often ridicule others are occassionally inconsiderate and have constant variations in moods (NMSA 1982) These anxieties are accentuated in American society because of the emphasis on early maturation and physical attractiveness Schools can play a major role in decelerating this earlier adolescent-adult-like social development by offering a truly transitional environment that is geared to the needs of transescents

Those responsible for the education and welfare of early adolescents must possess a thorough understanding of the intellectual social-emotional and physical development of transescents if learning experiences consistent with early adolescent needs and interests are to become a reality (McEwin & Thomason 1989) " As early adolescents become more complex and diverse so must the skills of the adults who work with and have the responsibility for them" (Thornburg 1982 p 270)

Middle School Teachers

Studies of teacher effectiveness began about 1900 peaked in 1928-1932 and then maintained a relatively high plateau until the 1950s These early studies focused on the identification of teacher traits or characteristics that described good teaching A few studies explored the relationships between teacher characteristics and student achievment During the 1960s more objective classroom observation instruments and models began to guide the

inquiry on teaching From the models of Mitzel, Biddle and Flanders educators began to realize that the study of teaching and teacher effectiveness was extremely complex And in 1975 The National Institute of Education held the first federally supported research conference Studies of teaching and teacher effectiveness are still the subject of many research inquiries Overall

> findings for teachers would seem to indicate that they need to be well-organized efficient task oriented knowledgeable verbally fluent aware of student developmental levels clear enthusiastic self-confident confident of student abilities hold high expectations be friendly and warm encouraging and supportive attentive accepting and tolerant (Cruickshank 1986 p 86)

This section contain a review of some of the studies that are particularly relevant to middle school teaching

No one is more important in the learning process than the teacher because the teacher is the "primary person who delivers the mission" of the school (Lezotte 1989) Ravitch (1981) stated that the "school factors that have the greatest influence (independent of family background) are the teachers characteristics" (p 10) She further suggested that "teacher characteristics leading to effectiveness should be the primary target of middle grades reforms" (p 10) Purkey and Novak (1984) concluded that

> despite thousands of research studies articles books and reports there is little agreement on the nature of good teaching A growing body of research points to the teacher his or her attentiveness expectations encouragements attitudes and evaluations as the primary focus in influencing students' perceptions of themselves as learners There is also ample research evidence that these teacher characteristics increase or decrease the probability of student learning (p 3)

Sorenson Husek and Yu (1963) stated that in "our society there is no universal set of expectations which defines a teacher's role" (p 268) But the roles identified by Sears (cited in Sorenson Husek & Yu 1963) seemed especially relevant to their study and to this study The roles were advisor counselor disciplinarian information giver motivator and referrer (to specialist or agencies)

Christopher Cross (1990) Assistant Secretary of Education for Research and Improvement of the United States Department of Education stated that "we must make sure those who teach these middle years understand young adolescents and are specially trained to teach them" (p 7) McEwin (1988) reported that middle level teachers need specialized training to (a) understand the characteristics of the age group and have the competence to deal with them in the classroom (b) have the competence to teach in an interdisciplinary team (c) master the skills of learning and teaching middle schoolers and (d) handle other unique responsibilities requiring commitment and understanding "The uniqueness of the middle school is reflected in the various duties of the classroom teacher which may include serving as a teacher advisor resource person, tutor curriculum planner seminar director and teacher of large and small group sessions" (Kohurt 1976 p 11) The middle school educator must demonstrate competencies that reveal special understandings skills and attitudes for working successfully with transescents in an open student-oriented climate

Much empirical data have been collected about what makes an effective middle school teacher. Johnston and Markle (1986) have summarized into 18 competencies the conclusions of Aspy and Buhler (1974), Brophy (1976), Clarizio, Craig, and Mehrens (1977), Combs, Blume, Newman, and Wass (1974), Edeburn and Landry, and Gage (1972, 1978), Gall (1976), Goode, Biddle, and Brophy (1975), McDonald (1976), Rosenshine (1976), Soar and Tinkunoff (1975), and VanHorn (1976). Johnston and Markle (1986) indicated that effective middle school teachers (a) have positive self concepts--do not have to be the center of attention at all times, (b) demonstrate warmth--smile, like students, and show it, (c) are optimistic, (d) are enthusiastic, (e) are flexible, (f) are spontaneous--encourage student expression, (g) accept students--avoid criticism, use frequent approval, (h) demonstrate awareness of developmental levels--assign appropriate tasks, (i) demonstrate knowlege of subject matter--alter lessons on the basis of student needs, (j) use a variety of instructional activities and materials, (k) structure instruction--organize lessons, (l) monitor learning, (m) use concrete materials and focused learning strategies, (n) ask varied questions, (o) incorporate indirectness in teaching--build on student statements, praise, encourage, and minimize criticism, lecture, and confusion, (p) incorporate success-building behavior in teaching, (q) diagnose individual learning needs and prescribe individual instruction, and (r) listen--to students. The authors encouraged thinking about these behaviors in clusters rather than as isolated characteristics.

Thornburg (1980) offered additional conclusions for middle level teachers based on his research. Learning must be functional to the student because "student interest in academic learning is directly related to how useful the student thinks learning is" (p. 5). Teachers should recognize that the perceptual world of the school environment is very different for students and teachers, so teachers should promote a professional role that does not over-identify with students. They "must not actively compete with students' friends or with powerful external influences such as the media" (Steer, 1980, p. 5). Learning must include opportunities to "understand social context and responsibility" (Steer, 1980, p. 5). Having friends is important to middle schoolers, and "much student achievement is related to gaining status with friends" (Steer, 1980, p. 6). Finally, students should not be expected to conform to everything at school. There need to be various ways for diverse students to feel successful (Steer, 1980).

According to Combs (1986) "recent studies have demonstrated that what makes good teachers is not their knowledge or methods, but the beliefs teachers hold about the students themselves, their goals, purposes, and the teaching task" (p. 39). Russell, Purkey, and Siegel (1982) agreed that at the heart of effective teaching, which these author label "artful teaching," are two basic beliefs: (a) that individuals are able, worthy, and responsible, and (b) that a teacher can make significant differences in the lives of students. Strategies suggested by these authors included personally inviting behaviors that

communicate caring and positive regard and tend to meet Maslow's lower level needs of security belongingness, and love The second strategy included professionally inviting behaviors that increase the students' efficacy competence and independence thus encouraging self-esteem and tending to meet Maslow's higher level needs of esteem knowledge and self-actualization "Artfully inviting teachers" integrate personal and professional behaviors into their teaching resulting in students who perceive themselves as capable valuable and responsible Students then act on these perceptions The 10 strategies suggested for inviting teaching are (a) creating a comfortable safe environment, (b) nonverbal communications that recognize and/or approve (c) physical communication or touching (d) verbal statements that convey appreciation and express concern (e) respecting differences and understanding ones own biases (f) developing trust acting responsibly and consistently (g) inferring behavior looking beyond the obvious for clues to students' learning (h) transmitting positive expectations (i) minimizing risks offering appropriate challenges reteaching when needed and (j) reinviting students to succeed Davies (1970) added that

> one problem we face when we try to measure teacher performance is that we evaluate statistics when we should be evaluating human relationships We cannot evaluate a teacher's competency in teaching reading or math without also evaluating his ability to interact with the child he is teaching A teacher who cannot meet human needs is not likely to meet educational needs. (p iii)

In over 400 opinions collected from graduate and undergraduate college students regarding their recollections of their most memorable teachers Wittmer

and Myrick (1989) also found that effective teacher characteristics were extremely important These students reported that teachers who had a negative impact were insensitive cold disinterested authoritarian ridiculing arbitrary sarcastic demanding punitive and disciplinarians Positive impact teachers were good listeners empathic caring concerned genuine warm interested knowledgeable trusting friendly humorous dynamic, and able to communicate The authors condensed these findings into six characteristics which they use to describe the facilitative teacher as (a) attentive (b) genuine (c) understanding (d) respectful (e) knowledgeable and (f) communicative (p 29) Stamm and Nissman (1979) added several personal qualities that are needed by middle school teachers (a) sensitivity warmth and understanding (b) organizational skills and well-informed in area of expertise (c) creativity flexibility and patience (d) good physical health have personal strength and stamina (e) truly respect uniqueness of students including those who differ from teacher's norms and values (f) respect for privacy and provider of options in academic and social processes (g) ability to listen and relate to another's point of view calmly and rationally In a 1961 study of excellent junior high teachers DeVane (1962) found that the excellent teachers had "favorable attitudes toward teaching toward children toward themselves and toward their peers" in common (p 379)

Buckner and Bickel (1991) have recently reported the views of 394 consumers of middle school education in grades 5 through 8 on what makes

teachers effective According to the authors the students expressed a distinct preference for "highly affective personal attributes" of teachers (p 26) Two-thirds of the students ranked the following personal characteristics as qualities of excellent middle school teachers "willing to listen are respectful toward students accept students are easy to talk with demonstrate warmth and kindness and are friendly" (p 26) The most often named professional characteristics for excellent middle school teachers included "teachers who really know the subjects they teach check to make sure all students understand are fair when grading are aware that some students need extra help and take more time for those who need it when explaining things" (p 26)

Students also are interested in teachers' appearances In a study by Hunsberger and Cavanaugh (1988) students always chose the teacher judged as attractive as the nicest the one from whom they would learn the most (except sixth graders) the one who would be the most fun and the one they would most like to have as their teacher The teacher with an unattractive appearance was the one students expected to punish the most

In a study of contemporary adolescent concerns Schmuck (1965) found that teachers were the second most common group of people with whom adolescents had major concerns with 40% of the students having concerns about teachers They were concerned about teachers not getting to know their students teachers' lack of interest in teaching and youth and teachers showing partiality toward some students Students reported that teachers' behaviors and

feelings toward students contributed to acceptance or rejection of the student by peers

Gilchrist (1989), in a case study of three effective schools, found that physical proximity and validating behaviors were important for teachers. He described physical proximity as teachers coming from behind their desks to circulate around the room and be in close contact with students. He suggested that putting a hand on the students' shoulders and maintaining eye contact helped to overcome the sense of isolation some students felt, while also creating a sense of support from the teacher. Validating is described as giving positive reinforcement and assurance with some form of personal acknowledgement. Yet Madden (1988) warned that teachers must be careful in the ways they praise students for their performances because student may erroneously infer that their worth is based on behavior or achievement. He suggested using a language of encouragement which "recognizes the growth and contributions that students make and promotes within them self-reliance, self-direction, and cooperation" (p. 142).

Student-Teacher Interaction

Rogers (1958) described a helping relationship as one "in which at least one of the parties has the intent of promoting the growth and development, maturity, improved functioning, improved coping with life of the other. The relationship between teacher and pupil would often come under this definition." (p. 6). According to Galbo (1988), the relationship of adolescents and adults in

the secondary schools may make a considerable difference in the quantity and quality of learning that occurs in the schools. He further stated that these relationships have not been exclusively studied and consequently are inadequately understood. "When parents are not viewed as significant, the affected youths usually seek out other adults who serve a similar function as do parents. Teachers are sometimes, though seldom, perceived as significant others" (p. 97). Since the configuration of the family has changed considerably and the dropout rate has dramatically increased, teachers may be missing an important opportunity to have a significant positive influence on adolescents' lives, both socially and academically, that may be vital to adolescents' normal development and critical to the health of our society.

There are several aspects of adolescent development which are particularly relevant to teacher-student interactions. First among these are self-concept formation and the maturation of cognitive skills (Galbo, 1987).

> Among middle school educators, the study of teacher effects on [student] self-concept is especially important, not so much because of the empirical evidence which points to the relationship between a healthy self-concept and student adjustment and achievement, but because the development of a positive self-concept is itself a central objective in many middle school programs. (Johnson & Markle, 1986, p. 16)

"The value of the school experience, as it is perceived by youths, influences the way they feel about school and about themselves" (Galbo, 1987, p. 99). Secondly, when teachers are perceived as significant adults, the quality of the relationship is maximized because the meaningfulness of the learning

experiences have been enhanced Thirdly teachers and adolescents in our society are bound together as participants in developing the culture of the future The reinvention of the culture will depend on the attitudes and values which youth develop as a result of their interactions with the adults in schools as well as adults outside of schools. If students find their teachers to be knowledgeable and caring human beings a more positive perspective will develop (Galbo 1987) Often teachers will state that one reason they became teachers was to have a positive influence on the youths they teach "Some students do not need or want a significant relationship with a teacher Some students who do want such a relationship find they are unable to connect with teachers in meaningful ways" (Galbo 1987 p 99) Teachers who want to have more meaningful relationships with students must realize that youths who need involvement with a significant adult may be those same students who are not successful in the traditional academic setting According to Galbo (1987), educators need to review their priorities to develop reasonable alternatives through which to expand their sphere of influence so that they include those students who need a significant connection Positive caring relationships between teachers and students are especially important in the middle grades because students at this stage of development continue to need adult guidance and support, even as they seek greater independence and self reliance and become more susceptible to pressures from peers and non-school influences (McPartland 1990)

Aspy Roebuck and Benoit (1987) after completing studies with more than 15 000 students and 1 000 teachers concluded that "empathy congruence and unconditional positive regard are necessary ingredients of effective teaching and productive learning" (p 88) In a study conducted by these researchers, 40 elementary teachers were trained to offer empathy congruence, and unconditional positive regard The students in the classes of trained teachers showed a mean gain in IQ score of 5 2 points greater than the control class gain During a 6-month period the students in the trained teachers classes also improved 1 year and 2 months in mathematics achievement and 1 year and 4 months in reading achievement In a similar study with adolescents the experimental students in addition to academic gains had fewer discipline referrals, and participated in more school activities than the control group These researchers not only demonstrated that teachers can be taught facilitative skills but also that students will benefit both academically and socially from interacting with teachers who are trained and use skills of empathy congruence and unconditional positive regard

Sapone Bauer and Phillips (1989) reported that a facilitative stance in the classroom "empowers both the teachers and students and creates an environment that encourages and supports learning" (p 251) These authors offered the following description of what a facilitative teacher does (a) allows students to share in decision making regularly (b) is explicit about expectations and provides rationales to students for the expectations (c) generates

excitement about learning (d) encourages classroom dialogue around academic topics and problem solving issues (e) helps students learn how to develop questions and find answers (f) teaches strategies for coping with academic tasks and (g) adjusts teacher support to students on an individual and ongoing basis The authors suggested that the facilitative stance has a powerful effect on learning opportunities and shifts the focus on students from control to support of students as they gradually assume responsibility for their own learning" (p 251)

Johnson and Prom-Jackson (1986) identified characteristics of influential teachers These characteristics were described by 18 to 34 year olds who were 76% black 11% Hispanic 6% white and 3 5% were Asian or American Indian Teachers identified as influential were from all subject areas and coaches counselors and administrators Respondents painted a rich verbal picture of how teachers had affected their development in areas of academic growth personal development, attitudes, careers and life choices The "social and interpersonal skills affective characteristics and temperament stand out as the dominant set of characteristics of influential teachers" (p 276) The findings of these authors suggests that teachers who are "major facilitators of academic growth and development [for minority students] achieved these outcomes through well developed interpersonal skills and abilities" (p 281)

Galbo (1989) reviewed the literature relevant to teachers as significant others for adolescents

> The presence or absence of significant adults within the school setting may have a critical impact on the value of the school experience for the teacher (in satisfaction with teaching) and the adolescent (in fostering healthy development) The primary prerequisite for the development of a significant relationship is for youth to perceive the teacher as being important and somehow special (p 549)

Teachers were mentioned as significant adults 10% or less by youngsters in these studies When adolescents chose particular teachers, it was usually based on similar academic interests or achievement in certain subjects The teacher and student also tended to have similar value systems Although the role of socioeconomic status is still unclear gender preferences do not appear to be a factor in significant relationships. "Even when teachers are not viewed as significant adolescents tend to be satisfied with their relationships with teachers and like them" (p 550) Students seemed to prefer the same characteristics in significant adults that they look for in peers such as trust communication understanding equitable treatment friendly interactions and personally satisfying relationships Students tended to seek out teachers to (a) discuss personal problems (b) ask for advice regarding educational and career concerns, and (c) to share similar school-related interests

Additional studies of student teacher interactions revealed that immediacy is a high-inference quality which has clearly been linked to student learning "Nonverbal behaviors smiling vocal expressiveness teacher movement, relaxed body position and verbal prosocial behavioral alteration messages have been identified as important variables of immediacy which result in increased affective and cognitive learning (Gorham 1988 p 41) Other

factors that were identified by 387 undergraduate college students as important variables for student learning are (a) use of humor (appears to be of particular importance), (b) praise of student work or actions, (c) willingness to become involved in conversations with students before, after, or outside of class, (d) teacher self disclosure of their own experiences or examples of others, (e) asking questions that encourage students to talk and that solicit student viewpoints or opinions, (f) getting into discussions about topics which students bring up, even if it is not part of planned lesson, (g) reference to the class as "our class" and to what "we are doing", (h) feedback on students' work solicited (how they feel about assignments, due dates, or discussion topics), and (i) invitations for students to telephone or meet with teacher outside of class if they have questions or want to discuss something. All of the above contribute meaningfully to student-reported cognitive and affective learning (Gorham, 1988). As class size increased a second set of behaviors tended to increase in value: teacher self-disclosure, asking questions or encouraging students to talk and referring to the class as our class. Addressing students by name and asking questions that solicit student viewpoint or opinions follow the same pattern, especially for affective learning. Eye contact, smiling, and vocal expressiveness are important regardless of class size. Gesturing, smiling at individual students, relaxed body positions, and movement around the classroom become more important as class size increased. These data indicated "an increased responsibility for teachers to utilize specific verbal and

nonverbal approach behaviors and strategies which reduce psychological distance between teachers and their students and these are likely to affect learning outcomes" (Gorham 1988 pp 50-51)

The following studies of teacher effectiveness were cited in Gorham (1988) Flanders (1960) and Cogan (1958) found more learning in student centered rather than teacher centered classes Amidon and Glammatteo (1967) differentiated between master and average teachers in terms of verbal behaviors such as acceptance of student feelings response to student initiated talk praise and tendency to ask open rather than narrowly focused questions McCarthy and Schmeck (1981) found teacher self disclosure and self-reference significantly related to free recall of information particularly among male students (who related better to self disclosure of male teachers in the study) (Gorham 1988)

Schuck (1970) (as cited in Merkle Johnston Hogan & Smith (1977) found that the ninth grade students who viewed their teachers as effective tended to perform better than other students When the students anticipated poor teaching their academic behavior suffered (Markle Johnston Hogan and Smith 1977) If the middle school teacher recognized the impact of approximating "ideal teacher behaviors and increased the frequency of these types of behaviors in the classroom the probability of effective instruction increased" (Markle et al 1977 p 7) Markle et al (1977) used a Modified Ideal Teacher Checklist with a Likert scale (1=important 2=undecided

3=unimportant) with 1208 sixth seventh and eighth grade suburban middle school students The implication of this study was that middle school teachers are able to improve the effectiveness of their instruction by developing a repertoire of facilitative behaviors and establishing an atmosphere of social amiability in the classroom These researchers also suggested that middle school students enter the classroom with preconceived ideas about the behaviors of an ideal teacher

Wardell (1990) conducted a "less than scientific study" in his homeroom (n=10) and discovered that middle school students were bored and irritated by teachers who talk too much give too many notes treat students like first-graders assigned too many selected library books give eight tests in a seven-period day have the same-looking walls all the time do not say hello in the halls and who embarrass students in front of the class Likewise these same students liked teachers who had a sense of humor are spontaneous talk to students between classes recognize when students are down and take time to talk smile give "high fives" and praise students for a job well done Another classroom study by Rebbeck (1986) with eighth graders yielded these suggestions for middle school teachers Students wanted teachers to be mean (strict) versatile patient supportive humorous qualified neat to use books and stay young The students did not want their teachers to be overconfident a ditto-server assign extra work for students that finish early yell give up on students leave the classroom be too intelligent have favorites or complain

Also teachers should let students go to the bathroom make written comments when correcting papers, and walk around to check on students as they work

"Adolescents need other adults over and above their parents whom they can trust, respect and confront, and that is true of youngsters in any nuclear family however admirable the parents may be" (James, 1974, p. 12). The loss of the extended family has caused a serious gap in adolescent identification process and schools are now the most likely source of significant adults. Comer (1989) stated that adolescents need "meaningful people to model their lives after, caring adults to help them understand how to be fair and responsible and at the same time not to compromise their own needs" (p. 6).

> Because of the fundamental changes in the American family and community life, today's students often lack close, stable relationships with caring adults. Schools cannot ignore this reality—it cuts across all class and ethnic categories. Schools have little choice but to compensate by becoming caring communities, by becoming more like supportive families. (Schaps & Solomon, 1990, p. 41)

When teachers do achieve this they also become more effective with many aspects of students development including intellectual, social, and moral. "Accumulating research shows that the greatest academic and skill achievement at the middle level comes when schools directly concern themselves with the attitudes, personal development and socialization" of students (Lounsbury, 1987, p. 2). Students that feel accepted by the teacher and some classmates can begin the task of real learning. (Duke, 1987). 'Kids don't learn from people they don't like, but they do learn from people they do

like and people can learn to show kids that they like them" (Aspy & Roebuck 1977, p. 31)

Advisement

Need for Advisement

A look at the traditions of American schooling revealed that academic skills have long been thought of as a means for the development of character. Schools have always been considered as a place where acceptable citizens for a democracy are developed (Noddings, 1988). In 1940, Detjen and Detjen concluded that the homeroom is a unit through which educators can "endeavor to develop character, teach citizenship, discover interests and aptitudes, and aid pupils in successful living. Those fundamentals of guidance must come from the homeroom teacher" (p. 232). In 1962, DiBiasio claimed that the homeroom was an important part of the junior high guidance program because through homeroom the student maintained daily contact with a teacher-advisor (p. 197). Clark and Clark (1986) stated that although middle school teachers are becoming increasingly aware of the developmental needs of their students and are attempting to implement responsive programs, they are being increasingly pressured to concentrate on academics as measured by standardized achievement scores. Additionally, according to Beane (1997), curriculum mandates passed in many states are so heavily entwined in academic accountability that teachers are unable to give sufficient attention to the affective issues in the middle grades. Combs (1981) suggested that current education

needs a more balanced perspective "education should not force a choice between smart psychotics or well adjusted dopes" (p 370) Therefore the development of cognitive skills is not enough In order for education to be meaningful and relevant to middle schoolers it is necessary to blend cognitive with affective learning (Castillo 1974)

Many people are becoming aware that failure to prepare young people for "productive and responsible adulthood has dire economic as well as social consequences' and that "investing in our youth has to be an important component of America's success in the world economy of the future" (Seeley 1990 p 4) Furthermore Nash (1950) reported that effective adulthood will require an education of the entire range of human capacities not just those qualities cosidered useful by the industrial and commercial interests of American society

> A highly complex and rapidly changing society demands that young people attain a high degree of personal social emotional maturation so that they can deal with life's concerns and problems Recent research in many areas especially the corporate sphere confirms the rule that human productivity is tied in important ways to the quality and length of human relationships (George Spreul & Moorefield 1987 p 2)

Aspy and Roebuck (1977) stated that "75 to 80% of human beings fail in the work-a-day world because they cannot relate effectively with other people yet the major part of our educational effort is directed toward improving cognitive instruction" (p 2) Therefore students must also be helped through their school

experiences to gain self-understanding and self-acceptence in order to succeed (Stewart, 1990)

The advisory program is a natural offshoot of the middle school concept concern for the nature of middle school students and the need to address effective curriculum. Stewart (1990) contended that today's young adolescents must experience daily guidence-releted activities in order to cope with the tremendous personal and social emotionel needs they face. Advisor-advisee programs are structured to provide a daily time for students to develop personal and interpersonal skills and to build warm, open human relationships. "If positive relationships exist within the school environment, then teachers and students can effectively work toward personal, social, and academic goals" (Sweat, 1978, p. 27)

Trensescents are involved in a search for self, but they conduct this search in the context of enormous personal changes and complicated social pressures. "Forming an identity and learning to make decisions were never easy, even when parents, churches, and schools reinforced essentially the same values. Today the process has become tortuous" (Landfried, 1988, p. 33). Additionally, for many transescents, the school is their last resort for gaining assistence in dealing with their increasingly complex personal and social issues (Brimm & Moore, 1985). For many youngsters "traditional sources of guidance, such as the family, are simply not dependable" (Beane, 1986, p. 189) so the schools have become the main constituency for many

transescents "Educators cannot ignore their responsibility to help these young people develop healthy perceptions of themselves" (Beane 1986 p 190)

Lounsbury (1987) stated that because of the critical development of self-concept during the middle school years the educational experiences of transescents are of increased importance Several hundred studies have demonstrated that "students with high self esteem tend to participate more have higher school completion rates exhibit more prosocial behavior and demonstrate greater academic achievement than do peers with unclear or negative self perceptions" (Beane 1986 p 190) Glines (1989) stated that many academic difficulties are related to affective problems students are facing "Middle schools cannot succeed in fulfilling their cognitive objectives if they do not recognize the interrelated affective goals" (National Middle School Association 1982 p 11)

Furthermore Cawelti (1986) reported that students are undergoing rapid physical changes experiencing peer and parental relationship problems family changes and are often unable to understand the importance of schoolwork itself "For many years schools tended to ignore the students social emotional and mental concerns and then wondered why so many things seemed to get in the way of learning" (pp 2-3) The Carnegie Task Force's 1989 report, Turning Points, emphatically addressed these student needs when it reported

> Every student should be well known by at least one adult Students should be able to rely on that adult to help learn from their experiences comprehend physical changes and changing relations with family and peers, act on their belief to marshal every school and community

> resource needed for the student to succeed and to help fashion a promising vision of the future Small group advisories enable teachers to provide guidance and actively monitor the academic and social development of students (p 40)

Most people who work with early adolescents agree that students need guidance to get through the difficult preadolescent years A quality advisory program is one way of helping early adolescents to cope and adjust to the changes in their lives (Delaney 1986) McPartland (1990) warned that it is difficult to succeed at providing both a high quality instructional program and creating positive student teacher relationships in the middle grades But he continued 'positive caring relationships between teachers and students are especially important in the middle grades because students at this stage of development continue to need adult guidance and support even as they seek greater independence and self reliance" (p 467) Elkind (1986) stated that individuals gain a healthy sense of self esteem and security from deep interactions from talking to and being with people to whom they are attached and who are attached to them "Middle graders need to be shown and told that they are lovable and capable even though they may sometimes act irresponsibly This is particularly needed by students who have convinced themselves that they are bad and who engage in the self-fulling prophecy of destructive behavior" (p 33) Bell (1977) of Shoreham Wading River Middle School stated that

> If schools are to meet the needs of pre adolescents they must provide consistency support and advocacy for every child An advisory system can lead to increased parent-school communication, fewer discipline problems greater understanding by teachers of students and most

> important a feeling in students of being wanted and cared for and understood Children are thus better able to deal with the complexities of their lives and this is what it (education) is all about (p 8)

'Guidance begins in and belongs in the classroom for if a middle school is truly to be a school for growing up it must be a guidance-centered school" (Moss 1969 p 186) Ratios of one guidance counselor for 300 to 500 students do not afford students guidance sevices on a caring adult on a daily basis Homebase or advisory programs can do much to "reduce the sense of anonymity and isolation many students feel particularly in larger schools" (Cawelti 1988 p 3) Students need to feel like they belong to form bonds with teachers and classmates, and to trust adults "The effect of the advisory system appears to be to reduce alienation and create a bond that makes student engagement and interest in learning a reality" (Hornbeck, 1969 p 41) "If schools are to become more personalized and effective the teacher advisor is a critical variable As the relationship between teacher and students becomes suppportive and mutually satisfying the school climate improves and both student and teacher performance is enhanced (Keefe 1986 p 90) "A school that takes its guidance function seriously is a healthy place for young people to grow and learn" (Vars 1989 p 5)

Many middle schools have instituted advisor-advisee programs to serve the affective needs of middle schoolers Lounsbury (cited in George et al 1987) stated that "the contributions of these arrangements which put a realtively small number of pupils in a special relationship with a teacher and gives them an allotment of time are enormous and the future development of such programs

should be encouraged" (p. iv)

"As young adolescents strive for autonomy as they grapple with learning how to regulate their own behavior, and make responsible choices the need for close, caring adult supervision and guidance is paramount" (MacIver, 1990, p 458). Transescents'

> concerns over body development, the desire for social acceptance the seemingly inevitable conflict with adult norms and expectations, the desire to try out new beliefs and the desire to experiment with heightened intellectual ability all point to the need for intensive and extensive guidance programs readily available and broadly based guidance Each transescent needs an adult who knows him well and is in a position to give individual attention Homebase or advisor advisee programs which provide transescents with regular opportunities for interaction with a small group of peers and a caring adult fill this need (National Middle School Association 1982 p 12)

Key leaders in the middle school movement have stated that an advisory system is an essential feature of schools serving youth aged 10 to 14 because it provides an adult who has the time and the responsibility for each student (Cawelti 1988)

Goodlad (cited in Clark & Clark 1986) in his comprehensive study of schooling found that parents also see the need for personal and social goals to be addressed in schools. Of the parents in this study 80% rated personal goals of schooling as very important and 56% judged the social goals as very important

George and Oldaker (1986) found that 93% of the 130 exemplary middle schools studied through a nationwide survey had a homebase period and a teacher advisor for each student In Florida the presence of advisory

programs has "increased from 18% in 1984 to 80% in 1989. Schools in Florida are taking more responsibility for students' social and emotional well-being" (Irvin, 1991, p. 12). While there are many benefits to having an advisement program, Doda and other advocates have admitted that advisement programs are not easy to implement and are not automatically successful (Willis, 1990).

Successful Advisement

"For schools to become more effective they must become more effective" (George, 1986, p. 183). Successful advisory programs fulfill these essential functions: (a) providing educational advisement, (b) increasing schoolwide communication, (c) improving home-school-community relations, and (4) enhancing the personal and social development of each student (Daresh & Pautsch, 1983). Advisory programs also provide middle schools and middle school teachers with a "unique and exciting opportunity to make thousands of effective objectives written in hundreds of curriculum guides come to life in a viable school program" (Doda, 1976, p. 2).

One of the most important programs in the history of the junior high/middle school movement has been the teacher-based guidance effort or the advisor-advisee program. George (1986) reported that it is "both the most popular component of the curriculum of middle level schools and the most disliked" (p. 184). Implementing an advisory program is an involved task in which many difficulties arise. George (1989) reported that in a study of principals undergoing the change from junior high schools to middle schools

one-half identified advisement programs as the least successful program during the first year. Principals reported that training for the advisement role was not sufficient and that pupil-teacher ratios were outrageously high. A typical obstacle to successful initiation of advisor-advisee programs is a reluctant teaching staff that lacks ownership of the program. Sufficient training in facilitative skills helps to build ownership and commitment by the staff (Gill & Reed, 1990).

> When teachers resist advisory programs, it is almost always because they do not understand the actual purpose of the program. When students dislike the program it is almost always because teachers do not have the interest or skill to conduct the programs successfully. When parents question the program it is almost always because they have not had the program explained clearly to them. (George, 1986, pp. 184-185)

Some keys for successful implementation have been suggested by Doda (1976) and Connors (1987). Doda suggested that staff development, small class size, time scheduled daily for 25 to 30 minutes, teacher flexibility in planning, and guidance counselor leadership all play a vital role. Additionally, Doda suggested that teachers set overall goals for effective education, orient students and parents to the concept of advisement, maintain a nonjudgemental attitude, spend time individually with each advisee, meet with advisees' parents, have group outings with advisees, share some things about themselves with advisees, and become effective listeners. "Teachers can become more effective advisors if they can become more effective listeners. Kids want to be heard" (p. 9). Connors' suggestions, which came from her dissertation research, included

1 Adequate materials and eppropnete activities are needed for each grade level

2. Every teacher should be committed to and involved in advisement.

3 Teacher student ratio should not exceed 1:20

4 A structured, detailed, and ongoing inservice training program should be provided to all advisors

5 Visible administrative support and involvement is important.

6 Guidance counselor's active involvement and support are necessary

7 Ongoing evaluation needs to be carried out

8 Parents should be informed and involved

9 Students should remain with the same advisor for 3 years

10 Student enthusiasm and involvement are an integral component of the program

11 A faculty council should be established

McKean (1989) found that in schools with advisory programs a more mentor-like relationships existed between teachers and students and teacher concern for students was slightly higher in advisory schools. He also found that student cliques and student self concept were not affected by advisor-advisee programs

Putbrese (1989) conducted a nationwide survey of seventh graders in schools with and without advisement programs to determine if advisory programs were accomplishing their desired outcomes with students He

concluded that advisor-advisee programs (a) improved teacher student relationships on a personal level (b) gave students a feeling of more control over decisions (c) promoted an atmosphere of equality (especially among girls) (d) provided opportunity for group work to practice communication skills try new behaviors and receive feedback in a relatively secure environment (e) improved the sharing of feelings between students although girls shared more than boys (f) maximized the altruistic nature of early adolescents (g) reduced the incidence of smoking and/or alcohol use and/or abuse and (h) appeared to make teachers more aware of or more attentive to student behaviors

Connors (1987) found that in the school she studied the following positive outcomes occurred for students through the advisement program The advisement program helped students (a) in their social growth (b) learn about the school (c) learn how to make friends (d) learn how to get along with others, (e) enhance relationship with a teacher (f) develop a sense of self-worth and (g) acquire and improve habits and attitudes necessary for responsible citizenship Additionally the author found that the advisement program provided advisors with the opportunity to know students on a one to-one basis and also contributed to a positive school environment Although advisory programs appear to have many key advantages for the student the programs are probably only as "effective as the time energy attitude and ability of the individual" advisors (DiBiasio 1982 p 197)

Teachers as Advisors

If students unmet needs are getting in the way of learning, it is the teacher s responsibility to try to meet these needs (Beane & Lipka, 1987) Therefore educators must accept an increasing share of responsibility for a "balanced and positive program of cognitive and affective development" (James 1986 p 2) The advisor advisee program provides a framework which enables the teacher to be responsible for the needs and development of the student and provides a structure in which the student is able to build confidence and a positive self-image (Sweat 1978) "Help provided youth in moving through the puberty cycle safely sanely and as positively as possible cannot be viewed as a frill" (James, 1986 p iv)

Teachers need more time with students than is currently allowed "If educators cared deeply about fostering growth and shaping both acceptable and caring people they could surely find ways to extend contact between teachers and students" (Noddings 1988 p 224) The advisement program provides time in the school day which can be devoted to affirmation of the student and the emotional social and organizational skills which will insure student success (Sherman 1990) Through advisement a secure and supportive environment can be created which allows a concerned and caring relationship to evolve between teacher and students (Levine 1988) The advisor can also encourage the development of a caring spirit among classmates which enhances the entire school climate (Vogel 1962)

Many educators have called early adolescence the make-it or break-it age because of the fragile self-concepts that are developing and solidifying. Guidance and advisement are concentrated efforts by the school to help students develop positive self-images and to keep any one student from going through the middle grades feeling alone (Bergmann & Baxter 1983 p 50). "Belonging and the belief that one belongs is the first step toward individual success whether academic or social. Therefore advisement must promise a base for belonging trust and support" (Sherman 1990 p 1). The goal of advisement is to defeat the feelings of alienation by providing a feeling of connectedness to the school community (Goldberg 1977 p 62). Additionally one way to bridge the gap between self-contained secure elementary classrooms and the large impersonal high school setting is the advisory program which stresses student teacher relationships and the personal development of transescents (Dodd 1981). Every student should have the opportunity to experience an advisor advisee program (Bergmann & Baxter 1983). This program can become an integral part of the middle schoolers' day. The "quality of the experience the genuine caring of advisor and the positive attitudes of peers will long be appreciated and remembered by students" (James 1986 p 62).

Many transescents share similar concerns and could benefit from discussion of these concerns in the warm permissive atmosphere of an advisory group led by an understanding adult who is aware of the feelings of

students and knowledgeable of the decision making process (Bergmann & Baxter 1983) The knowing advisor can also detect small problems and keep them from escalating into major difficulties A warm friendly understanding and helpful teacher that genuinely likes students performs best in the advisor role (Klingele 1979) Having an advisor means that each student has an adult in the school to turn to and advisement also provides a haven a "safe port in the storm of early adolescence (Maeroff 1990 p 507)

Advisors help students on an ongoing basis with the kind of help most counselors because of the number of students they serve do not have time to provide (Keefe 1986) Advisement puts one faculty member in continual close contact with each student and so that there is at least "one expert on each student one professional who understands that student well and who can mobilize school resources to meet the advisees needs" (Lake 1989 p 6) The goals of the middle school program require that student guidance be the responsibility of all teachers (James 1986) "Of all the professional personnel in the school teachers have the best chance to influence the self-perceptions of learners because they have the persistant daily contact that is necessary to become a significant other" (Beane & Lipka, 1987 p 54) For some students teachers are the most consistent adults in their lives (Bergmann & Baxter 1983) And for numerous students middle school is the last and only place where they will find a team of adults with a sustained interest in their welfare (Beane & Lipka 1987)

> Nearly every middle grade teacher has knowledge of the scope and sequence of appropriate content to teach the learner but few have the same studied appreciation for the complexity of the affective needs of their learners much less the needed repertoire of skills to facilitate growth in non-academic areas The goals of most affective education programs are too important and personal to leave to chance or in the hands of unskilled people (James 1986 p 45)

The differences in the teacher role and advisor role are more a difference in degree than kind Advisors assume a more facilitative role while interacting with their advisees "Facilitative skills rely on the person's ability to be a good listener questioner discussion leader intervener and guide" (James, 1988 p 52) Both good teachers and good advisors have these skills

Guiding middle schoolers requires both flexibility and patience on the part of the teacher Some teachers feel comfortable with guidance and advisement and would assist students in improving their self-concepts whether the school had a formal program or not (Bergmann & Baxter 1983) Additionally most teachers at the middle level do "more guiding and advising than they realize as they respond to the roller coaster personality of the early adolescent" (p 50)

If advisor advisee programs are to be effective it is essential that teachers be prepared for their role and given opportunities to learn basic guidance and counseling skills Teachers also need an understanding and appreciation for the advisory program (Myrick Highland & Highland 1986) The advisory program will only be as effective as the advisors who lead the program and "some people are simply better at advising than others" (Kratzer 1984 p 165) Additionally teachers need to be aware that leading an advisory group takes

preparation just as other classes do (Vars 1989) "What goes on in the advisor advisee class between the teacher and students is the final proof of the program" (Doda, 1981 p 6) An advisory teacher's enthusiasm optimism and caring are the primary motivating factors for the students and a major determinant of the quality of the advisory program (Sherman 1990) The advisor is likely to become the most important and accessible source of information for the student (Sweat 1978) Through this information sharing the teacher-advisor gets to know advisees well and is "generally seen by students as a powerful and effective adult" (Goldberg 1977 p 82)

Evans (1989) concluded that teacher advisory programs may also enhance aspects of teacher efficacy Advisement with its more personal relationships with students may provide the very thing that most people are seeking when they enter the teaching profession the chance to make a visible positive difference in young people's lives' (p 12) "For the middle school affective education is essential to the middle school teacher it is a chance to make a difference and to the middle school child it is the difference" (Doda 1981 p 10) Each student needs the continuing and caring advice only an experienced teacher can give "It is difficult to conceive of any other teacher role in the middle level school that approaches advisement in importance and proven success" (Keefe 1986 p 90)

Roles of the teacher advisor

There are numerous teacher roles associated with advisement Goldberg (1977) listed these roles of an advisor

1 Administrator who disseminates information to students and parents keeps records of student progress and welcomes students to the school

2 Leader who initiates student conferences stays in touch with teachers and parents and helps students to be a part of the school

3 Advisor who provides each advisee with a concerned listening empathetic adult that deals with feelings

4 Disciplinarian who is the students' advocate and has a relationship that allows the student and teacher to find solutions to problems

Advisor roles summarized by Alexander and George (1981) include the advisor as the academic expert on each advisee the school advocate and guide and the person most directly responsible for the social emotional education of the advisees There are numerous responsibilities associated with each role category "Middle-level educators know that students need teachers to be less than mommies but more than distant and aloof dispensers of knowledge" (George 1969 p 15)

Shockley Schumacher and Smith (1984) listed these roles for the teacher-advisor (a) establish caring relationships with individual advisees (b) available to discuss student concerns and interests (c) communicate among home school and community (d) assist students in obtaining information about

school activities (e) first line source of referral (f) academic expert and advocate for advisees (g) sounding board in working out student problems and (h) conduct group guidance activities (pp 73-74)

"The most difficult program to introduce and sustain continues to be not surprisingly the effective curriculum Things of quality and substance take much time and nuturing to produce" (James 1986 pp 39-43) Many of the difficulties with advisement programs are directly related to the teachers who serve as advisors including "lack of understanding and commitment lack of staff development and curriculum planning and perceived professional role conflicts" (Shockley et al 1984 p 74) "In the final analysis the success of any teacher guidance program rests squarely on the competence and commitment of the staff" (Vars 1989 p 5) Yet many middle school faculty members who are involved in an advisor role have never seen or experienced this type of mentoring in their professional or personal lives (Henderson & LaForge 1989) "Teachers are the heart of the school s guidance program" (Myrick & Myrick 1990 p 28) and as such they should know everything possible to enhance their teacher advisor role The findings of the present study will contribute to the available knowledge

Need for Further Research

The descriptions of effective teacher characteristics seem to be numerous but the need for further research has also been well documented by several authors Wittrock (1986) in the Handbook on Research on Teaching,

stated that teaching could be better understood and also improved by knowing the effects of teaching on the learners' thoughts. Johnston and McCann (1981) agreed that it is important and would be profitable to focus research on the nature of instruction that the student receives. Lounsbury, Marani, and Compton (1980) described the real curriculum as the one experienced by the student. These authors explained that researchers do not often attempt to understand the curriculum as it is experienced by students.

Struble (1990) warned educators that educational practice calls for frequent evaluation and reflection to insure effectiveness. Students, as the consumers, are a logical source of evaluative responses. Yet all too often educators neglect to ask students questions about their perceptions of instructional effectiveness.

The National Middle School Association (NMSA) members are also interested in "what works with students and how to do it" suggesting that applied research related to practices and procedures is needed (Johnston & Markle 1986). Freeman (1988) stated that few researchers have studied the personal characteristics of teachers and how they are related to students' perceptions of teacher effectiveness. The few studies that have been done in this area seem to have focused on the perspectives of undergraduate college students.

Galbo (1987) further related that not much is known about the differences teachers really make in the lives of adolescents or what causes some teachers to be viewed as significant by adolescents. Many of the studies which have

been conducted are questionnaire self-reports with small sample sizes. Few of the researchers attempted to validate the survey results through interviews or other means to corroborate the findings. "Overall, no single aspect of the topic of teachers as significant adults has been studied extensively. We need to know much more before we can expect the research literature to have a practical impact upon the behavior of practicing teachers" (Galbo 1987, p. 553).

Brophy and Good (1986) stated that "causal relationships that explain connections between teacher behavior and student achievement are not always clearly evident and are not easily translated into prescriptions for teaching practice" (p. 365). They suggested that more thick description and microanalysis of teaching in general and on teacher effects in particular are needed. "Students live in a world of attitudes, expectancies, and evaluations. Students' success or failure is related to the ways in which students perceive themselves and their environments and these are influenced by the prevailing message they receive in school" (Purkey & Novak, 1984, p. 15). "One of the biggest mistakes that can be made is to neglect the views of the customers--the students" (Burden & Hornby, 1989, p. 21).

However, there have been questions raised concerning the objectivity of using students as raters of teacher effectiveness. Porter and Brophy (1988) synthesized much of the research on good teaching. They reported the following studies by Patton, Carter, Clarke, McDowell, and McDowell and

Porter and Brophy Patton (1980) reported differences between teacher and student ratings of classroom climate Carter (1981) found that factors of student ratings only moderately approximated the actual patterns of instructional behavior Clark's studies (1987 cited in Porter & Brophy 1988) found that a teacher may be good for some students but not others) McDowell and McDowell (1986) stated that the expectations of male and female students also may differ (cited in Porter and Brophy 1988) Brophy (1979) pointed out that most research on classroom process variables used categories that included behaviors that although similar on the surface may have different meanings to students depending on the nonverbal accompanying behaviors the situations and the context These variations may not be apparent from classroom observational data or questionnaire data but may affect student interactions and outcome variables Also important in understanding classroom interactions are the students developmental levels and cognitive abilities (Marshall & Weinstein 1988, p 304) Additionally Bowers and Soar (1962) reminded researchers that it is inadequate to consider classroom social interaction without studying teacher and pupil personality traits

There is also a need for specific descriptions of effective teacher characteristics and behaviors Gorham (1988) found that it is difficult for teachers to apply perscriptions to increase "warmth " The term is abstract and the teachers must draw their own conclusions regarding how to be warm If

however the teacher learns that smiling increases warmth e specific behavior has been identified and can be modified The perscription becomes concrete

Most available research on teacher effectiveness tends to focus on adult perceptions of effectiveness in teachers such as Kounin (1970) Bloom (1976) and McDaniel (1986) (cited in Labonty & Danielson 1988) Labonty and Danielson (1988) found no studies that focused on whether children and adults have the same standards for judging teacher behavior These authors conducted a study with third and sixth graders who completed survey sheets about their opinions of effective teaching behaviors in storybook samples. They found childrens opinions of teacher effectiveness were gender and age consistent and that the judgements of students and adults were consistent The children ranked the teacher with effective teaching behavior as the one they liked the best and would most like to have as a teacher Dor-Shav and Peleg (1989) demonstrated that a subjective student rating scale may be used as a reliable measure of "goodness" as seen from the students viewpoint The use of students assessment of teacher behaviors has also been found by Andersen in a 1976 study to be a valid method of obtaining data (cited in Gorham 1988) He reported a high correlation between student reports and reports of trained observers

George (1989) called for national organizations "to form a consortium now to establish dimensions of advisory programs that are effective and practiced" (p 15) Connors (1987) recommended that further study is needed to

determine "What are the significant competencies of a successful advisor?" (p. 110). This study focused on the perspectives of students who experienced advisement weekly and teachers who regularly served as advisors in model middle school advisement programs. The goal of this study was to describe specifically what makes advisors and advising effective from the perspective of teachers and students directly involved in the process.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter contains a description of the case study methodology that was used to study student and teacher perceptions of the components of effective teacher-advisors for middle school students. Merriam (1988) described a qualitative case study as "an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a bounded phenomenon" (p. xiv). A case study is often the preferred method for research problems in which understanding is needed in order to improve practice. Researchers use case study methodology to gain an in depth understanding of a situation and the meaning it holds for those involved (Merriam, 1988). The case study also allows an inquiry to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of the real-life situation (Yin, 1989).

Questions

Case studies are the recommended strategy for how and why questions when the researcher has little control over events, and when the focus is on real life situations (Yin, 1989). A case study approach was used to investigate the following questions:

1. How do middle school students describe an effective teacher advisor?
2. How do the students' perceptions of what makes a teacher an effective advisor differ among students of different gender, race, grade level, socioeconomic status, and academic achievement?

3 How do middle school teachers describe effective teacher advisors?

4 How do teachers' descriptions of effective advisors compare and contrast with the descriptions of students?

5 From the students' and teachers' perspectives what can teachers do to facilitate their role as advisors?

Research Procedures

Teachers and students from nine model advisement schools in the state of Florida participated in the research Model advisement middle schools were designated by the Department of Education of the state of Florida through a grant writing process These model schools have exemplary advisement programs and the responsibility for helping several pilot advisement middle schools develop their advisement programs. The teachers and students from the participating model schools were surveyed and interviewed to determine their views of an effective advisor Data were analyzed to determine similarities and differences between teacher and student perspectives as well as differences and similarities among students' perspectives

Multi-site Case Study

A case is described as a single bounded system in educational research it may be a person a program a group of people a movement, an event an agency a concept or a project (Merriam 1988) In this study the researcher examined a selected group of people in a specific program--effective teachers as advisors in model middle school advisement programs A major advantage of using this multi-site approach is that the findings from multiple cases are often

considered more compelling and so the overall study is considered as more robust (Yin 1989)

The schools chosen for this study were selected for several reasons

1 They had been designated by the state of Florida as Model Advisement Programs which indicated that they have been successful in implementing an advisory program for several years and their personnel were sufficiently skilled to assist other pilot schools in developing advisory programs

2 It was assumed that because these schools have successful advisory programs, their teaching staff included teachers who have been successful in the teacher-advisor role

3 It also was assumed that at least some students at a model advisement school had positive experiences with advisors and considered some teacher advisors to be effective

4 Furthermore because these schools had applied for and had received funding grants for their advisement programs it was assumed that they would be cooperative in a research project that had a goal of providing information that could enhance advisement practice

5 Finally the schools chosen as model advisement schools are located throughout the state of Florida and are representative of many types of middle schools including small rural large inner city and suburban campuses

Data Collection

Berg (1989) suggested that inexperienced researchers should use multiple research strategies in a single study in order to obtain a more complete

and detailed picture of the situation and also to provide several means of verifying the findings. In order to collect the data necessary to answer the research questions posed in this inquiry, data collection included survey instruments and interviews with both middle school teachers and students and a review of written demographic information from each site. Demographic material about each model advisement school, its population, and the structure of its advisement program is reported in order to provide a complete description of the context of each situation studied and to determine if there are differences in the characteristics of the sites. The review of the demographic information also yielded the specific sampling categories and numbers that were necessary to be representative of each school's students and teachers. For example, it was anticipated that in some schools in southern Florida there would be a larger proportion of Hispanic teachers and students interviewed and surveyed and this did prove to be the case. These percentages changed dramatically as geographic locations of the model schools changed.

Surveys

A written survey instrument was completed by between 46 and 79 students at each of the nine model schools. Feldman (1981) stated that it is best for the researcher to personally administer the survey questions because the researcher knows what information is sought, what is really being asked, and what is really meant by a given question. Therefore, the survey used in this study was constructed and personally administered by the researcher. The questions for the surveys were derived from a review of the literature, including

developmental issues of students research studies and descriptions of facilitative behaviors and from the researcher's experiences with middle school students and teachers The student survey included a forced choice format of 27 multiple-choice questions including demographic information about each student The survey also included one written open-response question plus a place for students to list their choice of an effective advisor The multiple choice questions were scored by using a Scantron machine The written teacher survey was completed by a sixth seventh and eighth grade team of teachers (usually four or five teachers per team) at each school The survey was similar in format to the student survey and also was scored by Scantron machine

Results of the surveys are reported as marginal tabulations simple percentiles per category The answers to the open-ended question on each survey were individually read and the results tabulated and analyzed by the researcher Copies of the student and teacher survey instruments are included in Appendix B and Appendix C

Interviews

Interviewing is usually defined as a conversation with a purpose (Babbie, 1983 Berg 1989 Denzin 1978, Desantis, 1980 Lincoln & Guba, 1985 Marnam 1988 Patton 1980 Spradley 1979) "The purpose of interviewing is to allow us to enter into the other persons' perspective The assumption is that the perspective is meaningful knowable and able to be made explicit" (Patton, 1980 p 196)

There are several formats for interviewing. In this study a semistructured interview format was used with both student and teacher interviews. The semistructured interview involves the use of a number of predetermined questions or topics. These questions or topics are outlined in an interview guide, but the interviewer also is able to probe into the answers given and ask for further details on the topics. The interview guide assumes that there is common information that should be obtained from every person interviewed while allowing for flexibility in the wording and sequence of questions in order to adapt to the context of each specific interview. The interview guide helps to make interviewing a number of different people at various sites more systematic and comprehensive by defining the topics to be discussed during the limited interview times (Patton, 1980). Patton (1980) concluded that the interview guide is especially useful in conducting group interviews because it keeps the interview focused, while allowing individual perspectives and experiences to emerge. The semistructured interview format was chosen for this study because it provided the structure of focused general topics and the flexibility to adjust the interview to the participants style, tempo, and topics.

Care has been taken to include the types of questions that Spradley (1979) outlined. Descriptive questions allow the researcher to collect an ongoing sample of the informants' language; structural questions enable the researcher to find out how the informants organize their knowledge; and contrast questions help the researcher discover the dimensions of meaning which the informants employ.

Patton (1980) suggested the following sequence for conducting interviews (a) an opening statement that motivates the interviewee to participate (b) easy to answer descriptive questions followed by probes soliciting more detail (c) opinion feelings knowledge and skill questions that are easier to answer once a context is established (d) questions about the past or future and (e) demographic questions scattered throughout the interview How questions are worded is important in determining the quality of the response received Patton stated that good questions for qualitative measurement at the very least should be open-ended clear neutral and singular Care was taken to assure that these basic requirements were met in the interview guides used in this study The interview guides were reviewed by a panel of experts in middle school education qualitative research methodology and middle school teachers and students Questions for the interview guides were derived from reviews of literature including student developmental information research studies descriptions of facilitative behaviors and from the researcher's experiences with middle school students and teachers. Additionally an attempt was made during all the interviewing sessions to use appropriate student and teacher terminology

Teacher advisor interviews were conducted with two to four teachers at each model middle school who had been identified as effective advisors by the students Teachers were identified during student interviews and through a question on the student survey The goal of these interviews was to find out how teachers described effective advisors and to determine what effective

teacher-advisors believed could be done to assist teachers in becoming more effective as advisors. Each interview was audio tape recorded, and notes were taken by the interviewer. Patton (1980) encouraged the use of tape recorders during interviews because the data are recorded completely and correctly and so the interviewer is free to be more attentive to the interviewee. Taking notes is important in helping the interviewer formulate new questions as the interview moves along and also for providing feedback to the interviewee about what is sufficiently important to write down (Patton, 1980).

Student interviews were conducted with 123 students from the nine model advisement middle schools. Students selected for the interview process were randomly selected and were representative of the student body of that school in terms of gender, race, grade level, socioeconomic status, and academic achievement. Ten students from each of the grade levels at each school were randomly selected from class lists by the school's advisement coordinator. This list of 30 students was reviewed to determine if it was representative of the proportion of racial, socio-economic, and academic status of the school. These selections were verified through free/reduced lunch forms, report cards, and cumulative record perusal by the advisement coordinator. Assistance from the advisement coordinator at each school was important in conducting all stages of this research. Thirty students were given informed consent forms with the anticipation that all forms would not be returned. The pool of 30 students per school taking home consent forms yielded from 6 to 25 students at various schools who returned signed consent forms and therefore

could be interviewed A second check of representativeness of students who returned consent forms was made by the advisement coordinator at each school

Lofland (1971) reported that studies using qualitative interviews usually used about 20 to 50 interviews because of the amount of data collected from each interview This study included 123 students from nine schools in small group interview sessions of 1 to 10 students Lofland also reported that group interviewing may be more productive on topics that are not private matters or that would cause embarrassment Bogdan and Biklen (1982) concurred that group interviews can be useful in "bringing the researcher into the world of the subjects and in providing clues to the appropriate language to use" (p 136) It was decided that the group interview format was appropriate for this study because middle school students might respond more freely in a small group of peers than they would in a one-on-one situation with an unknown adult. Although students freely shared general information about advisors and advisement they were reluctant to share more in depth personal experiences in this small group of peers with an unfamiliar interviewer These interviews were audio tape recorded and notes were taken by the researcher Interview tapes were transcribed immediately after the interviews yielding more than 350 pages of transcripts. Garbarino and Stott (1989) stated that interpreting the meaning and importance of students' statements is easier if the researcher is able to work from a transcript of a tape

Interviewing preadolescents must be conducted carefully and tactfully because it may be difficult to understand and interpret the students' meanings. The extent to which the researcher is able to transcend the boundaries of age and authority may influence the quality of the information obtained (Fine & Sandstrom, 1988). Garbarino and Stott (1989) reported that there are no definite formulas for communicating productively with students. Thus the adaptability of the interviewer, the students, and the situation are important factors in the success of the interviewing process. "Interviewing children places great responsibility on the adult interviewer to arrange an appropriate setting, to access and monitor the childrens' competence to answer the questions, make appropriate adjustments throughout the interview, as well as to self-monitor the interviewer and make adjustments" (p. 183). The semistructured format allowed for flexibility. Additionally, because interviews took place in nine different middle schools, the interviewer needed to be especially flexible in adapting to a variety of situations, including interviews in media centers, cafeterias, teachers' lounges, classrooms, and offices.

Garbarino and Stott (1989) stated that preadolescents respond better to open-ended questions and questioning sequences that allow them some control over the topics discussed. After preadolescents have had the opportunity to say what they wanted, they then are more likely to respond to the interviewer's more narrowly defined probes. "Having an adult who listens to them, who is to some degree at their mercy, fits into preadolescents need for social control," according to Fine and Sandstrom (1988, p. 80).

The researcher also must treat these young informants with respect and consistently must show a desire to acquire competence in their social world The establishment of trust and its maintenance are critical for successful research Student responses to the interviewer s questions are "influenced by what the respondent thinks the questions mean what he feels the interviewer will accept as an answer and what he thinks will be the consequences of providing the information" (Garbarino & Stott 1989 p 173)

Fine and Sandstrom (1988) stated "that the richness of data that can be collected from preadolescents is significant and while there is beginning to be a substantial body of literature on this period preadolescence remains a 'dark continent' that needs to be further explored" (p 59) Some studies have shown preadolescents to be "more sophisticated more verbally effective emotionally considerate and more socially knowlegeable than we give them credit for being" (p 72)

The researcher took each of these matters into consideration in planning the interviews and also during the interviewing sessions with middle school students The researcher's training as a teacher counselor and researcher as well as five years of successful experience as a middle school counselor assisted in assuring that relevant and complete information was obtained

The interview guides were reviewed by an independent panel that included middle school educators and experts in qualitative research methods The interviewing guides and introductory statements also were used in a pilot study at a model advisement school that was not included in the data collection

sample Suggestions from the panel as well as those of the students and teachers in the pilot study were taken into account in the final interview guides. Interview guides informed consent forms and introductory interview statements are included in Appendices D through I

Data Analysis

Bogdan and Biklen (1982) described data analysis as a process of working with data breaking it into manageable units synthesizing it searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what has been learned and deciding what to tell others Merriam (1988) described data analysis as making sense out of the data collected

Patton (1980) suggested that overlapping the collection and analysis of data would improve both the quality of data collected and the quality of the analysis. The following suggestions for analysis in the field came from Bogdan and Biklen (1982) (a) focus to narrow the study (b) develop analytic questions (c) plan data collection in light of what was found in previous session (d) write comments about ideas and what is being learned (e) try out new ideas and themes on interviewees and (f) use transcripts to speculate and play with possible concepts. In this case study all audio tape recorded interviews were transcribed as soon as possible following the interview sessions The researcher read and wrote notes and comments on each set as they were reviewed As new insights and ideas were discovered they were further analyzed and questioned Emerging ideas were assessed in subsequent data collection sessions through added probes used in subsequent interviews

Merriam (1988) stated that even though analysis has been going on throughout the data collection phase analysis becomes more intensive once data collection is completed Patton (1980) suggested editing all the information collected sorting out redundancies fitting parts together, and organizing the case study materials either chronologically or topically for easy access The case record then is complete manageable and organized with all that is needed for subsequent analysis

The goal of data analysis is to discover reasonable conclusions based on evidence contained in the data (Merriam 1988) Lofland (1971) stated that the final stage of analysis brings order to previously developed ideas Merriam described a process for starting intensive inductive analysis by beginning with several thorough readings of the previously organized case study data during which the researcher jots down notes comments observations and questions on the case record These notes constitute the beginning stages of organizing abstracting integrating and synthesizing which then form the patterns and regularities that subsequently are transformed into categories that have emerged from the data

Guidelines for developing categories include (a) frequency of being mentioned in the data (b) audience for report (c) uniqueness (d) categories that reveal new areas of inquiry or (e) provide information on a common problem (Merriam 1988) Data analysis included open coding of transcripts on a line-by line basis Researcher memos also were written on the transcripts and the note pads to provide a running account of thoughts and implications

from the data Once categories had been discovered they were made more complete by searching through data for additional relevant descriptive data Patton (1980) also suggested that it is important to search the data for rival competing or other plausible explanations as well as negative cases that do not fit the identified categories If supporting evidence for alternative explanations is not found confidence in the researcher's conclusions is increased The researcher checked and reported the consistency of the findings from both student and teacher data and from both survey and interview data

"The goal of qualitative research with children is to get to know them and better see the world through their eyes This style of research assumes minors are knowledgeable about their worlds that these worlds are special and noteworthy and that we as adults can benefit by viewing the world through their hearts and minds" (Fine & Sandstrom 1988 p 12) Special care was taken during the phases of data analysis to determine and define the categories from student data in terms of student perspectives using student terminology for category headings when appropriate and being careful to include the essence of their meanings when statements were removed from the original interview transcriptions

Data were analyzed in an ongoing fashion during the course of the investigation Patterns in the data were identified Descriptive categories were formulated and tested throughout subsequent data collection Transcript sections were assembled into file folders by categories and further studied to

identify emerging patterns and themes. According to Tesch (1990) the researcher's task is to explore possible relationships of all variables. Further analysis searched for rival explanations, negative cases, and consistency of findings. Categories that emerged from the data were identified, described, and reported.

Validity in Case Study Methodology

The goal of all research, including qualitative case studies, is to produce reliable and valid findings in an ethical manner. "Regardless of the type of research, validity and reliability are concerns that can be approached through careful attention to a study's conceptualization and the way in which the data are collected, analyzed, and interpreted" (Merriam, 1988, p. 165).

Internal Validity

Internal validity addresses the question of how the study's findings reflect reality. In case study research, what is being studied are the participants' perceptions of reality and understandings of their world. Thus, the internal judgements of those studied are the most appropriate means for judging internal validity. According to Merriam (1988), when reality is viewed in terms of the participants' world, "internal validity is a definite strength of qualitative research" (p. 168). In a case study, the researcher attempts to understand the perspectives of those studied in order to uncover the complexity of human behavior in a specific context and to present a holistic interpretation of the situation. According to Merriam, six basic strategies ensure internal validity (a) triangulation, or using multiple sources of data, methods, or investigators to

confirm findings (b) member checks or reviewing data and interpretations with participants (c) long-term observations at a site or repeated observation of the same phenomenon (d) peer examination or colleague comments on emerging findings (e) involving participants in all stages of research and (f) clarifying researcher s assumptions and biases at the outset of the study

This study involved multiple sites for inquiring about effective teacher advisors and also used both survey and interview formats for data collection Teacher and student perspectives were recorded compared and contrasted Data collected from the survey instruments influenced questions asked during the interviewing process and information gleaned from preliminary analysis of interview data was checked with students and teachers in subsequent data collection sessions Additionally preliminary findings were reviewed with the advisement coordinator at several schools to obtain feedback and reactions The researcher's assumptions and qualifications also have been discussed in Chapter I All these things add to the internal validity of this case study

External Validity

External validity concerns the extent to which the findings of one study can be generalized to other situations Eisner (1991) suggested that what is learned in one school can sensitize educators to features that may be found in other schools "Generalizations in education whether produced through statistical studies or through case studies need to be treated as tentative guides as ideas to be considered not as prescriptions to follow" (p 209) In qualitative case studies it is most likely that generalizability is determined by

the readers who decide if the research findings fit their situation Schofield (1990) warned thef detailed description is needed so that the reader can determine the degree of fit between the case studied and other cases to which findings might be generalized Additionally a finding emerging repeatedly from the study of several heterogeneous sites would be more robust and thus more likely to be useful in various other sites (Schofield 1990)

A third suggestion for increasing generalizability of findings comes from Merriam (1988), who stated that describing the typicality of the program or individuals studied could help users to make comparisons with their own situations This case study involved several sites that were heterogeneous and typical of many middle schools throughout the state Each school and advisement program is thoroughly described Students and teachers interviewed and surveyed also are representative of teachers and students at other middle schools Data also were analyzed according to various categories (such as grade level gender and others) to provide specific information to the reader

Reliability in Case Study Methodology

Reliability is the extent to which findings can be replicated "The goal of reliability is to minimize the errors and biases in a study" (Yin, 1989 p 45) Three suggestions were mentioned by Merriam (1988) that contribute to the consistency or dependability of a study They are (a) the researcher should explain all assumptions behind the study researcher biases the basis for selecting participants the context of the study and a thorough description of

both (b) triangulation or the use of multiple methods of data collection and analysis and (c) the researcher should present the methods used in great detail rather like an audit trail In this case study multiple methods of data collection were used a thorough description of the subjects and the context is provided and details of the research methods are included

Ethics in Case Study Methodology

According to Erickson (1986) two basic ethical principles apply in qualitative studies

1 Those studied need to be informed about the purposes and procedures of the research and any risks that may be involved

2 Research participants must be protected from possible risks even if the risks are minimal

Interviewing in a case study can carry risks for the informants Eisner (1991) reminded researchers that people often do not have others who are interested in listening attentively to them and so they may unconsciously share a great deal of information that could become psychologically uncomfortable for the informant if used carelessly by the researcher Anonymity of subjects and sites must be protected Identities should remain confidential if this agreement was made when access was arranged In this study all participants signed informed consents The study also was approved by the University of Florida's Human Subjects Review Board which is concerned that no potential harm comes to the subjects in a research project. Findings are reported as a summary of all sites studied and are not identified by individual schools.

Analyzing the data may present other ethical considerations Because the researcher is the primary instrument in data collection and analysis all data is filtered through the researcher's theoretical position and biases "There is simply no ethical alternative to being as nonbiased, accurate and honest as is humanly possible in all phases of research Biases that cannot be controlled should be discussed in the written report" (Merriam 1988 p 184) It is the researcher's responsibility to produce and disseminate a case study in an ethical manner

Surveying and interviewing students and teachers concerning the effectiveness of teachers in fulfilling a specific job role as advisors could be a potentially delicate situation The procedures protected the anonymity of all participants. Only students first names and teachers' last name initial or other group descriptors were used on surveys or during interviews The school sites are described using initials and demographic information only The interview guide format with specific questions related to effective advisors kept the interviews from being of personal or professional concern for the informants The researcher also was aware of the potential for researcher bias in the collection and analysis of data and took all necessary steps to abide by the ethical standards for qualitative researchers

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS: DEMOGRAPHICS AND SURVEY DATA

Demographics

This section contains a demographic description of each of the nine schools where research data were collected and a description of the organizational features of each school's advisement program. Through a grant writing process by the Florida Department of Education, these schools were selected to serve as a Model Advisement School because they have exemplary advisement programs with verified success. In its role as a model school, each school is expected to host visiting teachers and administrators and to conduct inservice training for pilot advisement school personnel and other Florida middle schools that are beginning advisement programs. This year, 1991, will be the last year of funding for these pilot and model advisement projects because of a shortage of funds for education in Florida.

School A

School A is located in rural North Florida. There are 740 students in this school. They are 80% white and 20% black students. Forty percent of the student body qualifies for free or reduced priced lunch. The school was built as a middle school in 1980 and incorporates a school-within-a-school concept where students spend the three years of middle school housed in the same wing of the school. This school has had an advisement program for eleven

years It was one of the original Florida Model Advisement Schools This year School A had decided to take a sabbatical from serving as a model Nevertheless it was decided to include the school in this research project because it has had advisement for so many years and because it was the only model advisement school in the northern area of the state

This school's advisement program is organized in a way to truly provide small group guidance to the each student once a week for 45 minutes Each advisor's homeroom is divided into thirds and one-third of the students attend small group advisement rather than physical education one day a week This arrangement provides a 1 10 advisor/advisee ratio On Mondays and Fridays all students go to physical education while the teacher plans the weekly advisement lessson and conducts other team business Only academic classroom teachers serve as advisors

There were 79 students surveyed in three separate classrooms of whom there were 19 sixth (24%) 37 seventh (47%) and 23 eighth (29%) graders surveyed There were 44 (56%) male and 35 (44%) female students with 6 (8%) black 72 (91%) white and 1 (1%) other race student. High mathematics groups accounted for 33 (42%)students average for 43 (54%) and 2 (2 5%)students reported low level mathematics classes Regular priced lunches went to 62 (78%) students while 14 (18%) students received free or reduced priced lunches Teachers are organized into two person teams at this school so a sixth and a seventh grade team of teachers and an eighth grade teacher completed surveys on effective teachers as advisors

One seventh grade teacher of science reading and mathematics and a sixth grade teacher of science reading language arts and social studies were interviewed Both teachers were white females Student interviews were conducted with 17 students 5 (29%) sixth graders 7 (41%) seventh graders and 5 (29%) eighth graders Of the students interviewed 7 (41%) were black and 5 (29%) were male

School B

School B is located in a large urban city in South Florida It is an older school located in a busy residential neighborhood near an elementary and a high school There are 1465 students in this crowded school building The student body is made up of 75% black 11% Hispanic and 11% other race students The "other" category includes the few white students who attend the school School B is a magnet school for artistically talented students and includes an academically gifted student center as well Students participate in these special homogeneously grouped classes for two periods a day and the remainder of their classes are in the regular school program The school serves students in sixth through ninth grades in these special programs The school building and grounds inside a high chain link fence were very comfortable with many classroom doors decorated in African-American symbols This school proudly proclaims its honor as a National School of Excellence

This Model Advisement School has had an advisement program for five years and has served as a model for three years Advisement sessions occur

daily before first period for 20 minutes Students are grouped randomly and heterogeneously for advisement with a 1 23 ratio of advisor to adviseees Students remain with an advisor for one school year All academic elective physical education and special education teachers serve as advisors. The weekly advisement schedule includes two days of advisement activities provided to the advisors by the school s advisement coordinator one day of sustained silent reading one day for writing and Friday as an optional activity day

There were 54 students that participated in the effective teachers as advisors survey, with 23 (43%) being sixth 15 (28%) seventh and 16 (30%) eighth graders Black students completed 40 (74%) of the surveye, 7 (13%) surveys were completed by Hispanic (or Latino as the students preferred to be designated) 3 (6%) white and 4 (7%) were other races Free and reduced lunches were purchased by 28 (52%) students and 24 (44%) paid regular prices for lunch Upper level mathematics classes were reported by 15 (28%) students 31 (57%) reported average and 2 (4%) students reported low level mathematics classes Eight surveys were completed by teachers at School B with 4 (50%) being sixth grade 3 (38%) eighth grade and 1 (12%) sixth through eighth grade reading teachers

Only 9 of the 30 students who were given permission forms to be interviewed returned them signed Only 7 of these 9 students were present for the interviewing These 7 students were interviewed as one group in the school's media center which was crowded and noisy The students were

friendly and talkative during the interviewing session even under these conditions The group included 4 (57%) black girls 1 (14%) black boy 1 (14%) Latino girl (with half her face painted blue for spirit day) and 1 (14%) West Indian girl Two teachers were interviewed in the media center Both teachers were white and taught music to sixth through ninth graders One was male and a team leader while the other was female

School C

School C is located in a large South Florida city It is in a quiet residential neighborhood The fencing for this school building is located between pillars of the building and surrounds only the building The grounds include rolling grassy areas that are very well kept. Once the gates are opened in the morning the campus becomes a busy bustle of 1143 sixth through ninth grade students and their teachers. The student body is divided evenly between black Hispanic and white ethnicities and the free lunch program serves 33 5% of the students The school building is an older, three story building School C has applied for and has received many grants that have provided funding for technological improvements and creative innovations in instruction in many subject areas including advisement

Advisement is held before first period for 24 minutes daily This school has been a Model Advisement School for two years and has had an advisory program for four years All academic elective media and special education teachers, as well as several specially selected clerical and custodial staff members serve as advisors Students remain with the same advisor for all four

years at School C Some students expressed resentment with this arrangement and stated that they were stuck with the same advisor because the administrators did not want to go to the trouble of reorganizing advisement groups each year The ratio of advisor to advisees is 1 24 Grade level groups are balanced by race sex, and are academically heterogeneous

At this school eight students were interviewed in three small groups There were 4 (50%) sixth graders 3 (38%) seventh graders and 1 (12%) eighth grader interviewed who were 4 (50%) white 2 (25%) black and 2 (25%) Hispanic students The interview setting was a conference room next to the teachers' lounge Students did not seem to be inhibited if a teacher came through the conference room during the interviewing and they expressed likes and dislikes with their advisement program with equal vigor The researcher asked and was granted permission by the students to share with the advisement coordinator some of their suggestions for improving advisement

There were three teachers individually interviewed at School C These teachers included a Hispanic female science teacher of grades 7 through 9 a young white female sixth grade teacher, and a white female teacher who runs a parenting center on the campus This parenting center is one of the school's grant projects

During their advisement period 53 students were surveyed in three different classrooms There were 17 (32%) sixth graders 16 (30%) seventh and 20 (38%) eighth graders completing the survey Of these students 11 (21%) were black, 18 (34%) Hispanic and 22 (42%) white High level

mathematics classes were reported by 16 (30%) of the students 27 (51%) reported average and 9 (17%) were in the low level mathematics classes Free and reduced price lunches were served to 25 (47%) of these students while 26 (49%) ate regular priced lunches

There were 8 teacher surveys completed at School C Of the surveyed teachers 2 (25%) taught sixth grade 1 (13%) taught seventh 4 (50%) taught sixth through ninth grades and 1 (13%) was a non instructional clerical staff member who served as an advisor

School D

School D is located in a medium size town in east central Florida It is a well kept, relatively new, one-story brick school building Students were friendly and helpful and seemed genuinely interested in participating in this research project as shown by 25 of the 30 (83%) students who returned signed student/parent informed consent forms, enabling them to be interviewed The total number of students at this sixth through eighth grades middle school is 1 405 The racial background of the school population is 78% white 21% black and 1% Hispanic The student body includes 33% on free or reduced priced lunches

School D has had an advisement program for the last three school years and this is its first year as a model advisement school Each advisor meets for 30 minutes daily with advisees Immediately after second period, from 10 20 a.m until 10 50 a m Advisor and advisees are randomly matched heterogeneously grouped and remain together for one year The ratio of

advisor to advisees is 1 20 in the seventh and eighth grades and 1 27 in the sixth grade Group size is larger in sixth grade because students have their self contained sixth grade teacher as their advisor while in seventh and eighth grades elective teachers also serve as advisors on various teams. All academic elective and special education teachers serve as student advisors In addition to regular advisement activities, this school has adopted a video series to be used with each grade level Each team also is required to have a school or community service project Students receive an alphabetical grade for participation in advisement as well as a conduct grade on their report cards In order to have more teacher parent and student involvement in the advisement program throughout the school year monthly steering committee meetings are held after school A student from each team reports on the progress of advisement and then student, teacher and parent representatives vote on or plan for any upcoming schoolwide advisement issues These steering committee meetings often are attended by more than 100 people Teams are given flexibility in planning their daily advisement activities in order to better meet the needs of their advisees

At School D 65 students were surveyed including 26 (40%) sixth 26 (40%) seventh and 13 (20%) eighth graders There were 8 (12%) black 50 (77%) white 3 (5%) Hispanic 1 (1%) Asian and 3 (5%) other race students surveyed Nine (14%) students were on free lunch and eight (12%) on reduced price lunch Surveyed students included 30 (46%) males and 34 (52%) females This was the first year of advisement for 30 (46%) students the

second year for 29 (45%) the third for 5 (8%) and the fourth year for 1 (1%) student The county where this school is located would not give permission to include a question about the students' academic achievement levels so the question about the students' mathematics levels (Question C) was deleted from the survey at School D

At School D 9 (36%) sixth graders 7 (28%) seventh graders and 9 (36%) eighth graders were interviewed in grade level groups These students included 9 (36%) boys and 16 (64%) girls 5 (20%) of whom were black 1 (4%) Asian and 1 (4%) Hispanic

Two teachers that the students had identified as good advisors were also interviewed at this school One was a white male art teacher and the other was a white female sixth grade teacher in her first year of teaching Surveys were completed by 12 teachers at School D with 5 (42%) being sixth grade 5 (42%) seventh grade 1 (8%) eighth grade teachers and 1 (8%) elective teacher who taught sixth through eighth graders

School E

School E is located in an affluent Southwestern Florida area It is a relatively new building that is undergoing construction for additional classrooms It is an open-concept school with many classrooms and the teachers lounge open onto a main corridor around the media center This school does not have an advisement coordinator for their Model Advisement Grant, and the job is shared by the principal and teachers on the staff The racial backgrounds of the 935 students at School E include 94% white 5%

Hispanic 5% black and 5% American Indian Free or reduced lunches are served to 14% of the students

This school has had advisement for eight years and has been a model school for the last three years Advisement occurs daily during the first 26 minutes of the school day Two days a week students are involved in Quest advisement activities one day is for grade level intramurals and the remaining two days are quiet study times Special programs and grade level assemblies are sometimes scheduled during quiet study times Students also produce a video news program that is broadcast to all classrooms during this time Quest Skills for Adolescents is a commercial affective education program sponsored by Lions Clubs International to help young people develop positive social behavior Advisement classes at this school also adopt a community service project for the year Advisment classes are heterogeneously grouped although several of the academic classes are homogeneously grouped Students have the same advisor for one year and all academic elective and special education teachers serve as advisors The physical education teachers are not advisors because of their involvement in the intramural program

Surveys were completed by 58 students from School E 17 (29%) sixth 17 (29%) eighth and 24(41%) seventh graders High level mathematics classes were reported by 30 (52%) students 24 (41%) average mathematics, and 2 (3%) students were in low level mathematics The ethnicity of the surveyed students at this school included 53 (91%) white 4 (7%) Hispanic and 1 (2%) Asian student Free or reduced school lunches were received by 5 (9%)

of the students surveyed. There were 17 students interviewed in three grade level groups with 2 (12%) Hispanic students, 1 (6%) American Indian, and 14 (82%) white students. Students and teachers were interviewed in a conference room adjacent to the principal's office, which was private, comfortable, and free of distractions.

Teachers completed 11 surveys, one team each of seventh and eighth grade teachers, and two sixth grade teachers. A male teacher of seventh and eighth grade gifted students and a female seventh grade language arts teacher were identified as effective advisors and consented to be interviewed for this study.

School F

School F is located in a West Central Florida city and houses 880 sixth through eighth graders. The sprawling one story brick building was built in the 1950s. The student body is made up of 70% white and 30% black students and has suffered through some racial tension in the last several years. Free or reduced priced lunches are served to 50% of the student body.

The advisement program at School F has been active for five years and has been a Model Advisement Program for two years. Advisement groups are arranged heterogeneously by alphabet and meet each morning for the first 20 minutes of the school day. Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesdays are reserved for affective education activities. Thursday is an academic drill day, which involves test preparation activities. Friday is the day for student silent reading or teacher reading aloud. Academic, elective, physical education, media

special education teachers and the cafeteria manager serve as advisors to students The ratio of advisor to advisees at this school is 1 20

Effective teachers as advisors surveys were completed by 13 teachers at School F including 5 (38%) sixth grade 4 (31%) seventh grade 3 (23%) eighth grade and 1 (8%) special education teacher Teachers interviewed included a white female sixth grade teacher and a white male seventh grade social studies teacher

Students interviewed included 2 (17%) black students and 10 (83%) white students 3 (25%) were seventh graders and the rest (75%) sixth graders There were 57 students surveyed with 19 (33%) from each of the three grade levels Of the surveyed students 23 (40%) were black 28 (49%) were white 3 (5%) were Hispanic and 3 (5%) were other races Free or reduced price lunches were obtained by 26 (46%) of the students High mathematics classes were reported by 5 (9%) students average by 42 (74%) students and low level mathematics classes by 4 (7%) students This was the first year in advisement for 25 (44%) students 17 (30%) were in their second year and 13 (23%) in their third year as advisees Females accounted for 30 (53%) of the 57 students surveyed

School G

School G has a student body of 1250 students in a South Central Florida city The racial balance includes 83% white 16% black and 1% Hispanic students Free and reduced lunches are served to 45% of the students in a cafeteria that has an electronic thumb print identification system to

record lunch purchases This school has been doing advisement for nine years and has been a model school for four years, the longest of all the models Advisement is held every school day for the first 26 minutes of the day It is called Prime Time and is used to prime the students for a successful day at school Advisement groups are randomly and heterogeneously assigned by teams The ratio of advisor to advisees is 1:21 All academic elective physical education media and special education teachers serve as advisors Students have the same advisor for one year Mondays and Fridays are reading days two or three of the remaining days are used for advisement activities Report cards are distributed through advisement classes Advisors are encouraged to make contact with each of their advisee's parents early in the school year and to participate in parent-teacher conferences for their advisees

At School G 46 students were surveyed 19 (41%) from sixth grade 10 (22%) from seventh grade and 17 (37%) from eighth grade Of these students 2 (4%) were Asian 5 (11%) were black, 2 (4%) were Hispanic, and 34 (74%) were white Free or reduced price lunches were available to 13 (28%) students while 32 (70%) ate regular priced lunches Upper level mathematics classes were reported by 11(24%) students and 33 (72%) students reported average level mathematics There were no students reporting low level mathematics classes at this school and 4% of the students surveyed did not answer this question There were two groups of students interviewed These groups included 6 (43%) sixth, 4 (29%) seventh and 4 (29%) eighth graders

There was 1 (7%) black student 1 (7%) Hispanic student and 12 (86%) were female

Both teachers interviewed were black female sixth grade teachers One seemed somewhat skeptical of why two black teachers had been chosen for interviewing when there were so many good advisors at the school She was informed that the students had mentioned her as an effective advisor and she seemed pleased to continue with the interview Surveys were completed by 11 teachers 2 (15%) from sixth grade, 5 (45%) from seventh grade and 4 (36%) from eighth grade

School H

School H is located in a Central Florida city and houses a student population of 1138 The racial backgrounds of the students are 75% white 22% black and 3% Hispanic and 44% of the students are on free or reduced priced lunches Some of the school's academic classes are heterogeneously grouped This school has had an advisement program for four years. This is its first year as a Model Advisement School Advisement classes are held five days a week for 25 minutes first thing in the morning All academic elective and special education teachers serve as advisors and are matched randomly by computer with their advisees The ratio of advisor to advisees is 1 19 Most students have the same advisor for three years

There were 46 students surveyed including 18 (39%) sixth 15 (33%) seventh and 13 (28%) eighth graders The mathematics class levels reported by these students were 19 (41%) in high level 23 (50%) in average and 4 (9%)

in lower level classes. There were 1 (2%) Asian, 11 (24%) black, 4 (9%) Hispanic, and 30 (65%) white students surveyed. Free or reduced lunches were served to 19 (41%) of the students surveyed, while 26 (57%) had regular priced lunches. Surveys were completed by 2 sixth grade and 2 eighth grade teachers.

There were 4 teachers interviewed. A white male eighth grade teacher wanted to be interviewed but would not consent to being audio-tape recorded. Notes were taken and transcribed by hand. He had some negative remarks about the need for school teachers to assume the role of advisor, which he felt was a role that parents should handle, and he resented that they were not doing so. He seemed to take a very serious and concerned attitude regarding his advisor role. The other 3 teachers included 2 female sixth grade teachers, 1 of whom taught mathematics and 1 language arts, and 1 was an eighth grade male history teacher. All were white. There were 7 students interviewed in three groups. All student and teacher interviews took place in the teacher's lounge, which did not seem to inhibit anyone. Of the interviewed students, 3 (43%) were black, 4 (57%) were white, and 2 (29%) were male students.

School I

School I is located in a very small, North Central Florida town. The total student population is 450, with 70% being white, 25% black, 4% Hispanic, and 1% other race students. Free or reduced lunch eligibility is 46% of the student body. Some academic classes are heterogeneously grouped. School I is in a rural area and in an old building. New construction is in progress to improve

the facilities The construction and the yelling of students and adults made this seem a somewhat noisy yet productively busy environment

School I has had an advisement program for five years and this is its second year as a model Advisement is held five days a week for 25 minutes first thing in the morning with three days reserved for advisory activities The guidance counselor plans all advisement lessons after weekly meetings with the team leaders to assess the students' needs. All certified staff members serve as advisors except the counselor and administrators providing a 16 1 advisee/advisor ratio Advisors and advisees are matched randomly by computer There is a process for changing advisors if a relationship problem cannot be resolved Because this is a small school most teachers know most students so the advisors stay with the same group of students for only one year The reason for this is so the advisors will have their advisees in an academic class as well as in advisement

All students were surveyed and interviewed in the schools' clean and orderly cafeteria There were 51 students surveyed 16 (31%) from sixth, 19 (37%) from seventh and 15 (29%) from eighth grades Of the students surveyed, 13 (25%) were black, 4 (8%) Hispanic, 32 (63%) white and 1 other race student (2%) Mathematics ability grouping included 21 (41%) for the high group 25 (49%) for the average and 4 (8%) for the low mathematics groups Regular priced lunches were purchased by 21 (41%) students while 28 (55%) used free or reduced prices This was the first year of advisement for 23 (45%) of the students second year for 17 (33%) third year for 8 (16%) students, and

the fourth year of advisement for 1 (2%) student. The teachers surveyed at School I included 7 (50%) sixth grade 4 (29%) eighth grade and 3 (21%) teachers who taught sixth through eighth grades

The three groups of students interviewed included 4 (24%) eighth graders 8 (47%) seventh graders and 5 (29%) sixth graders All students were open and friendly and seemed genuinely pleased to be involved in an interviewing session These were the only students who seemed to prefer the advisement worksheets and discussions rather than the games and parties that had been suggested by students at most other schools as their favorite activities Of the students interviewed 6 (35%) were black and the rest (65%) were white Females accounted for 6 (35%) of the 17 students interviewed The advisement coordinator stated that they had many more male than female students enrolled this year She was not sure why this was the case

A white male eighth grade teacher was interviewed in his social studies classroom A black female seventh grade science teacher was interviewed in an office Both were friendly and intently interested in advisement being successful for their advisees.

Summary of Demographics

Research data were collected in nine of eleven Florida Model Advisement Middle Schools located throughout the state Two of the eleven model schools were rendered ineligible for the study because of lengthy district level procedures for conducting research in their counties that were impossible to complete before the end of the school year and because there were two

other schools in the sample of 9 model schools with similar populations and from nearby geographical locations included in the data set Survey information was collected from 505 students 174 (34%) in grade six 180 (36%) in grade seven and 152 (30%) in grade eight. There were 249 (49%) males and 255 (51%) females surveyed A total of 156 (31%) students reported that they were in upper level mathematics classes 248 (49%) in average mathematics classes 26 (5%) reported lower level mathematics classes and 73 (14%) students did not answer the question on mathematics levels Of those 73 students 65 (13%) were from School D where that question was eliminated from the survey because of a district-level request Students surveyed included 5 (1%) Asian 117 (23%) black 45 (9%) Hispanic 325 (64%) white and 17 (3%) students of other races This was the end of the first year of advisement for 227 (45%) students the second for 179 (35%) the third year for 88 (17%) and the fourth year of advisement for 8 (1%) students Three students marked more than one racial category Free lunches were available to 123 (24%) students reduced priced lunches to 51 (10%) regular priced lunches to 310 (61%) students and 20 (4%) students did not answer that question perhaps indicating that they were unsure of their socioeconomic status or they were unwilling to reveal it

Interviews were conducted with 123 students in 23 small groups varying in size from 1 to 8 students Of the interviewed students 46 (37%) were white females 19 (15%) black females 3 (2%) Hispanic females 1 (1%) Asian female 3 (2%) other race females and 29 (24%) were white males 15 (12%)

black males 5 (4%) Hispanic males 1 (1%) Asian male and 1 (1%) other race male Total females interviewed were 72 (59%) and males were 51 (41%) There were 45 (37%) sixth graders 48 (39%) seventh graders and 30 (24%) eighth graders interviewed

The total number of teachers surveyed was 65 There were 41 (46%) sixth 29 (24%) seventh and 31 (36%) eighth grade teachers surveyed Language arts was taught by 28 (33%) of the teachers surveyed mathematics by 24 (28%) reading by 26 (31%) science by 25 (29%) social studies by 29 (34%) vocational by 1 (1%) fine arts by 4 (5%) physical education by 1 (1%) remedial subjects by 1(1%) and 7 (6%) teachers taught other subjects Several teachers taught more than one subject and more than one grade level Of the teachers surveyed 58 (68%) were female and 27 (32%) were male There were 8 (9%) black teachers surveyed 75 (88%) white 2 (2%) teachers of other races and one teacher did not answer the question The training for teaching was secondary level for 36 (42%) teachers elementary level for 34 (40%) and specifically middle/junior high level for 18 (21%) teachers Bachelor's degrees were reported as the highest degree earned by 55 (63%) advisors Master's degrees by 28 (32%) Specialist degrees by 2 (3%) a Doctorate by 1 (1%) and 1 (1%) noninstructional person did not have a college degree Eight (9%) of these teachers had been advisors one year two to three years for 32 (37%) four to five years for 26 (30%) and six or more years for 20 (23%) teachers

There were 21 teachers interviewed White females accounted for 10 (48%) of this group 7 (33%) were white males 3 (14%) were black females and 1 (5%) was a Hispanic female Sixth grade was taught by 8 (38%) of the effective advisors interviewed 4 (19%) taught seventh 3 (14%) eighth 3 (14%) were elective teachers 2 (10%) taught a combination of grade levels and 1 (5%) ran a parenting center

Survey Findings

Student Survey Results

Survey questions were compiled from information on effective teaching and on middle school advisement during a review of the literature and from preliminary discussions with middle school advisors and advisees during the pilot study The survey questions were reviewed by a middle level expert two research experts a district-level research coordinator middle school practitioners including a former principal a counselor and four teachers and 17 middle school students. A copy of the student survey is in Appendix B

The survey was designed to determine the subtle distinctions in student opinions about middle school teacher advisors rather than to discriminate one correct response from several incorrect responses In several of the responses the students selected two or more of the options as equally desireable This is reflected in the percentages of responses which added up to more than 100% and also in items where three or four responses were selected by similar numbers of students Questions A through F were used to collect demographic

information about each student. Questions G through AA were designed to elicit student views of effective middle school advisors

On six of the 20 questions (Questions G-AA) from the students' survey of advisor effectiveness the answer chosen by the highest percentage of students from all the subgroups was the same The percentage indicated is the percentage of total student responses A substantial portion of all student groups agreed that

(a) A good advisor should be caring and concerned about students [question G--89%]

(b) A good advisor notices when an advisee has a problem and talks with the advisee individually [question J--83%]

(c) When a student has a problem a good advisor helps the student think through some possible ways to handle the problem [question N--63%]

(d) A good advisement class for most students has things to make or do [question R--51%]

(e) A good advisor likes being with students [question T--48%]

(f) A good advisor shows respect for all students and their opinions [question Y--52%]

The percentages stated reflect the percent of the total survey population that selected each answer It should be noted that the answers for each question usually were from a selection of four choices (except question J) and that in all subgroups (gender grade race socioeconomic status, achievement and advisement experience) the choice was the preferred selection by the largest

percentage of students This indicates that there are several areas where the perspectives of a substantial number of students are similar

Survey Questions

Here each of the survey questions will be discussed and the differences in the answer choices will be delineated Further discussion of the implications of the various answer selections is given in Chapter 6.

Question G--"A good advisor should be
young (less than 30 years old)--6%
handsome or pretty--8%
up-to-date in thinking and acting --22%
caring and concerned about students--69%

Students are interested in their advisors caring and being concerned It is interesting to note that these young adolescents who are so interested in image and appearance are able to bypass the young and pretty choices to select e more meaningful characteristic such as caring But students are concerned that their advisors be able to relate to them which is reflected in their second choice up-to-date in thinking and acting This answer together with the first choice caring and concerned accounts for 91% of the student answers selected for this question

Question H-- A good advisor makes students feel special by
listening to what students say--42%
respecting everyone s opinions--32%
not lecturing students about behavior--16%
noticing when students seem sad or upset"- 22%

Most of the student groups agreed that "advisors make them feel special by listening to what students say " but 37% of the low mathematics students chose "not lecturing students about their behavior" as their favored choice

Question I--"A good advisor finds time to talk with advisees
privately- 47%
in small groups- 21%
in class discussions 25%
outside of advisement class"--11%

All of the student subgroups selected the choice that a "good advisor finds time to talk to students privately" except the Asian group which selected "finds time to talk with advisees in class discussions" 60% of the time

Question J--"Good advisors talk with advisees individually
regularly (like once a month)--37%
only when he/she notices an advisee has a problem"- 63%

This was a two answer item and 63% of the students selected the second answer Apparently most students did not want the advisor's individual attention except in a problem situation

Question K--"A good advisor remembers special events like a student's birthday
by singing "Happy Birthday" in advisement class- 40%
by quietly giving me a card- 18%
by having a birthday party--29%
by not mentioning my birthday so I won't be embarrassed'--15%

Male (35%) and Asian (60%) students preferred the party choice Although this is a rather trivial matter by adult standards it is one form of student recognition that is a fairly common component of middle school advisement classes

Question L--"A good advisor plans for advisement class by
letting students do whatever they want during advisement --14%
teacher planning and having advisement lessons ready!--17%
letting students plan some advisement activities--26%
students and advisor planning together for many advisement activities"- 44%

If the choices of letting students plan some activities and the students and advisor planning together are combined they account for 72% of the students'

responses The black students preferred the options of "letting students plan some activities" by 35% versus 34% over students and teacher planning together This is a very negligible difference but it was the reason for this response not being selected by all of the subgroups as the favored choice and included as an overall agreement response

Question M--"A good advisor makes students feel important by
listening to students 32%
respecting student opinions- 33%
talking to students outside of class--9%
caring what happens to students in school"--39%

The students selected three of the four answers approximately the same percentage of the time All three of the choices were equally desireable to students Sixth graders (30%) females (32%) and other race students (41%) selected 'listening to students" as their first choice 'Respecting student opinions" was the favored choice of seventh and eighth graders (36%) males (36%) other race (41%) and low mathematics (33%) students The remaining categories of students selected 'caring what happens to students in school" as their favorite choice

Question N--"When a student has a problem a good advisor
refers you to a counselor--9%
tells you how to handle the problem--17%
tells you how he/she handled a similar problem when he/she was your age- 14%
helps you think through some possible ways to handle the problem"--63%

While a majority of students selected the last option the low mathematics students also selected "tells you how to handle the problem" 30% the same percentage as "helps you think through some possible ways to handle the

problem " And Hispanic students also selected the "tells you how to handle the problem" answer 36% of the time almost as much as the 36% of Hispanic students that chose 'helps you think through some possible ways to handle the problem" Most students do not want to be told what to do Students are interested in teachers facilitating their decision making processes through helping them examine the options and consequences. This could indicate that a counseling type approach would be accepted by most students

Question O -"A good advisor
treats everyone fairly and equally--64%
never gives a discipline referral during advisement--10%
expects all students to follow certain rules--9%
makes sure everyone feels safe and comfortable in advisement"--25%

The only subgroup of students that did not select "treats everyone fairly and equally " was the Asian group which selected "makes sure everyone is safe and comfortable' (60%) If the percentages of students that selected these two answers were combined it would account for 89% of the student responses perhaps indicating that treating everyone fairly and equally would make the advisement environment safe and comfortable for most students

Question P- "A good advisor s room
has students art work or projects displayed 17%
has lots of things for students to do--41%
has assigned seats that never change--5%
is arranged so students can work in small groups"--35%

A total of 79% of the students selected "lots of things to do" and "arranged so students can work in small groups." For eighth graders (48%) and "other race" students (41%) it was especially important that a "room arranged for small

groups" which may reflect the necessity for students to feel like they belong The reduced price lunch students (57%) favored "having things to do" Hands-on and cooperative learning advisement activities should include odth of these middle schoolers preferences

Question Q--"A good advisor shows concern for my feelings by
asking how I am feeling--26%
noticing when I am acting upset 27%
finding time to talk to me--31%
not laughing at my problems--24%

"Finding time fo falk" was especially important to females (35%) "Noticing when I am upset" was important to 53% of the other race students And the low mathematics students selected "asking how I am feeling" for 44% of their answers The overall percentages for each category were very close which may indicate that these all are important ways for an advisor to show concern for students feelings

Question R- "A good advisement class for me has
mostly teacher led discussions- 17%
lots of films to watch and discuss--20%
things to make and do 51%
activities that require paper and pencil" -11%

Although" things to make and do" was the favorite choice for all groups of students It was interesting to look at the second choices of each subgroup of students Films were chosen by eighth graders (24%) males (26%) blacks (23%) reduced price lunch (31%) students and regular mathematics (22%) students as a second choice Discussion was selected by sixth graders (20%) girls (20%) Hispanics (26%) free lunch (24%) and low mathematics students

(26%) as their second choice Paper and pencil activities were the third choice for black students at 16%

Question S--"A good advisor would go out of his or her way to help me
understand my work--39%
if I'm in discipline trouble with the office--21%
by talking to another teacher for me--16%
by sticking up for me in a parent teacher conference"--26%

Many students wanted help understanding their school work but 28% of the free lunch students wanted help if they were in discipline trouble and Hispanic (36%) and other race students (35%) wanted an advisor to stick up for them at a parent teacher conference These answers suggest that students would like their advisors to be their advocates and mentors in the middle school

Question T--"A good advisor
likes advisement--9%
likes being with students--48%
shows enthusiasm--34%
thinks advisement is important"--16%

"Likes being with students" and "shows enthusiasm" combine to account for 81% of the answers selected demonstrating the importance of both to the students

Question U--"A good advisor is someone you can
trust with a secret--26%
joke around with--26%
tell how you really feel--32%
find if you need to talk--34%

This is another question with answer selections that were equally appealing to the students But "trusting an advisor with a secret" was important to other race students (41%) and low mathematics students (41%) The low mathematics students also wanted an advisor they could joke with (41%) and 41% of the

females and 40% of the high mathematics students wanted an advisor they could find if they needed to talk"

Question V--"A good advisor
is flexible--81%
shares information about him/herself--35%
never gets angry--20%
is intelligent"--21%

Asian students (60%) thought an advisor's flexibility was important "Shares information about him/herself" was important to 45% of Hispanic 41% of reduced priced lunch 40% of free lunch students and 40% of average mathematics students Flexibility and self-disclosure seemed especially important to students

Question W--"A good advisor
feels good about him/herself--12%
has a positive attitude--36%
has a sense of humor--30%
has a caring attitude"- 35%

Several students marked more than one item in this question as is indicated by the 113% total Black students marked having a "positive attitude" 42% (versus 32% for caring attitude) and females marked a "caring attitude" 44% (versus 24% by males) Females seemed especially interested in the more personal characteristics of their advisors such as caring

Question X--"A good advisor
lets us work in small groups 19%
plans lots of different kinds of activities for advisory- 26%
teaches advisory lessons on topics like dealing with peer pressure learning how to solve problems and getting along with friends--25%
lets students bring up topics for discussion"- 34%

"Letting students bring up topics for discussion" was selected as most important by eighth graders (43%) females (40%) and other race (41%) students. "Planning lots of activities for advisement" was important to 40% of the Asian students. It is interesting to note in this question that students selected lessons taught on advisory topics (25%) almost as much as they selected lots of kinds of advisory activities (26%).

Question Y--"A good advisor
shows respect for all students and their opinions--52%
does things with students after school--16%
compliments students when they do something well--27%
regularly discusses students' grades with them"--13%

Although "respects all students and their opinions" was definitely the preferred choice for all student groups, 34% of the seventh graders and 32% of the white students selected "compliments students when they do something well" as their second selection. The low mathematics students (30%) thought it was important for advisors to "regularly discuss their grades with them". Students' answers indicate that they wanted respect for all students and also personal recognition.

Question Z--"How long does it take you to trust a good advisor enough to confide in him or her?
one to two weeks--26%
one to two months--35%
half the school year--20%
I probably wouldn't trust an advisor even after one whole school year"--17%

One to two weeks was the favored choice for sixth graders (31%) black (30%) and free lunch students (37%). One to two months was the preferred choice for seventh (36%) and eighth (45%) graders. Other race students selected one

semester (35%) and low mathematics students selected never and one to two months 33% of the time The interview section will provide more information on students developing trust for their advisors

Question AA--"In my middle school I have had a good advisor
Yes--75%
No"--17%

Several of the student subgroups had a lower number of "yes" responses for this question They included

67%--sixth graders (versus 79%--seventh 81%--eighth)
61%--blacks students (versus 100% Asian 76% Hispanic and other races 80% white)
68%--free lunch students (versus 76% reduced 78% regular)
63%--low mathematics students (versus 76% high 75% average)

Reasons for these responses are unclear Some reasons for the low "yes" responses may be postulated but they will need further study to be verified These will be discussed in Chapter 6

Student Subgroup Differences

Various subgroups of the students surveyed had differing opinions on questions of advisor effectiveness as was mentioned above The following descriptions reiterate these differences by student subgroup categories Because there were four answer choices for most questions there was not a strong majority for many answer selections The differences reported in this section indicate the category where the largest percentage of answers were clustered for each subgroup of students surveyed

Grade level

According to sixth graders it is important for a good advisor to have a "positive attitude" (35%) Sixth graders also stated that a good advisor is "someone you can find if you need to talk" (34%) Fair and equal treatment was especially important to sixth graders (69%) It took many sixth graders (31%) less time one to two weeks than the other two grade levels to trust an advisor enough to confide in him or her Sixth graders also reported having had a good advisor 67% as compared to the 79% of seventh and 81% of eighth graders

According to sixth (43%) and seventh graders (46%) a good advisor's "room has lots of things for students to do" Seventh graders stated that a good advisor is "someone you can tell how you really feel" (35%) and someone that "finds time to talk" to advisees (35%) "Complimenting students when they do something well" was important to 34% of seventh graders "Things to make and do" in advisement was chosen by 61% of the seventh graders

Seventh (39%) and eighth graders (37%) wanted their advisors to have a "caring attitude" A "sense of humor" was a close second for all of the grade levels "A good advisor lets students bring up topics for discussion" was a favored answer for all grades but was especially important to eighth graders (43%) Eighth graders also stated a good advisor is someone you can "joke around with" (31%) Eighth graders agreed that for the" room to be arranged so students can work in small groups" is important (46%) One to two months are needed for seventh (36%) and eighth graders (45%) to trust an advisor enough to confide

Also a "good advisor goes out of her way to help students understand their work" was important for all groups but many eighth graders (30%) indicated that they wanted their advisor to" stick up for them in a parent-teacher conference." Additionally a majority of students wanted advisor and advisees to "plan together for many advisement activities" but 31% of the seventh graders wanted advisors to "let students plan some advisement activities" and 22% of the sixth graders wanted teachers to plan and have advisement lessons ready. "A good advisor makes students feel important by caring what happens to students in school" was followed very closely by both "listening to students" and "respecting student opinions" by all grade levels. Although there are many areas where all grade level students agreed on their survey answers there also were several areas that indicated some specific although perhaps minor differences of opinions. These differences could be important to advisors as they plan for their advisement classes. Additionally advisors that have multi-level advisement groups need to be especially careful to plan in ways that will meet the needs of each level of advisees.

Gender preferences

Gender preferences were apparent in the answers to several survey questions. Females indicated that a good advisor makes students feel important by "caring what happens to students at school" (45%). Male students indicated that "respecting student opinions" make them feel important (36%). Males wanted to be able to "joke around" with their advisors (33%). They also preferred advisors who have a "positive attitude" (36%) and are" flexible"

(32%) The females also wanted their advisors to be available if they needed to talk (41%) For females it was important for the advisor to "have a caring attitude" (44%) and "share information about him or herself" (39%) Students and advisors planning together for advisement was selected by 51% of the females and 40% said that they would like to be allowed "to bring up topics for discussion " Males preferred to have their birthdays remembered by having a birthday party (35%) Females would rather have the class sing "Happy Birthday" in advisement class (47%)

A majority of both male and female students reported having had a good advisor although more females (50%) thought they have had a good middle school advisor than males (71%) "When a student has a problem a good advisor helps the student think through ways of handling the problem" was a clear favorite for both sexes but males were twice as likely as females (24% 11%) to want an advisor to" tell them how to handle the problem " Also although having "lots of things to make or do" was the outstanding choice for all students.. males were twice as likely (26% to 13%) as females to want to watch and discuss a film

Achievement differences

Students completing the effective advisor survey were asked to indicate whether they were in upper level average or lower level mathematics class in order to determine their achievement levels Students indicated that 36% were in upper level mathematics classes..56% in average..and 6% in lower level mathematics classes Only 11 students out of 446 did not answer the question

School D did not have that question on their survey because of a county level request to delete it Some differences were apparent especially for the 26 students who indicated that they were in lower level mathematics classes

Students who reported a lower mathematics level stated that an advisor makes them feel important by "respecting student opinions" (37%) These students preferred that the advisement classroom be arranged so that students could "work in small groups" (41%) Lower achieving mathematics students wanted an advisor that had "lots of things to make or do" (48%) that "asked how students feel" (44%) that they can "trust with a secret" (41%) and that "jokes around with the students" (41%) A "sense of humor" (30%) was even more important than a "caring attitude" (26%) to many of the lower achieving students A good advisor makes the students feel special by "not lecturing about behavior" was selected by 37% of low mathematics students. Perhaps low achieving students want at least one teacher who they can count on to focus on their positive rather than negative behaviors, so that they can relate to each other in a relaxed and joking manner Students from this group also reported that they would trust an advisor enough to confide in one to two months or never would confide in an advisor (both at 33%) Only 63% of the students in this group indicated that they have had a good advisor

Students from the average mathematics classes wanted their advisor to "share information about him or herself" (40%) and have a "positive attitude" (36%) Also "finding time to talk to students privately" was important to 50% of the average mathematics group

Higher level mathematics students wanted an advisor they could "find if they needed to talk" (40%). They preferred an advisor with a "caring (42%) positive" (41%) attitude and one that is "flexible" (35%). "Respecting all students and their opinions" (57%) and "having things to make or do" (53%) were important to high mathematics students as well as to lower achievers.

All ability groups of students agreed that a "good advisor should show respect for all students and their opinions," but it was twice as important to lower achieving students (30% versus 13% and 10%) that their advisor regularly discuss their grades with them" and also that the "advisor does things with students after school" such as chaperoning or sponsoring activities (27% versus 11% and 15%). Perhaps low achieving students would like someone at school that they trust to take an interest in them and their grades, take time with them, and encourage them. Also, "when a student has a problem a good advisor helps the student think through some possible ways to handle the problem" was tied with "tells you how to handle the problem" for lower achieving students at 30% each. What lower achieving students have been trying has not been working well academically for them, so perhaps they would like the advisor to make some new suggestions they could try. In response to the question of "have you had a good advisor in middle school," only 63% of the lower ability students reported having had this experience, versus 76% and 75% for high and average level students.

Ethnic differences

Racial differences were evident in several responses. Students that completed this survey were Asian (5), black (117), Hispanic (42), white (324) and other (17). The other category included some American Indian, some students from other countries such as India, Pakistan, or Iran, and some students who seemed to be of racially mixed backgrounds and were unsure of what category to select. Although the sample numbers for the Asian (5) and other category (17) are small, these two groups accounted for several of the differences noted.

Although all other ethnic groups reported that a good advisor "treats everyone fairly and equally," 60% of the Asian students thought it was most important for a good advisor to "make sure everyone feels safe and comfortable" in advisement and that all students are respected. Asian students wanted many kinds of activities planned for advisement (60%) and a flexible advisor (60%) that had class discussions (60%) and helped them with schoolwork (60%). Caring and listening were especially important to these Asian students (60%). Most students would like special events such as their birthdays remembered by singing "Happy Birthday" in advisement class, but 60% of the Asian group would prefer having a birthday party.

Black students reported that they wanted an advisor they could talk to privately (46%). Black students indicated that they wanted their advisors to have a "positive attitude" (41%), share information about themselves (38%), teach lessons on various advisement topics (27%), and on student selected

topics (27%) and let students plan some advisement activities (35%) Many black students would be ready to confide in an advisor in one to two weeks (30%) Only 61% of the black students reported having had a good advisor

Hispanic students stated that an advisor shows concern for students by "finding time to talk" (38%) They also wanted an advisor that would support them at a parent-teacher conference (36%) Hispanic students indicated that a good advisor is "someone you can trust with a secret" (33%) that "shares information about him/herself" (45%) and that "tells you how to handle a problem" (36%)

For white students it was important for an advisor to have a "sense of humor" (37%) They also wanted a "flexible" advisor (36%) that they "could tell how they really feel" (36%) that "compliments students when they do well" (32%) and "helps with school work" (42%)

Most students reported that a good advisor makes students feel important by "caring what happens to students at school" but 41% of the students of other racial backgrounds stated that "listening to students and respecting student opinions" were more important to them The other ethnic group wanted an advisor's classroom to have "things for students to make and do" (65%) wanted a "room arranged so students could work in small groups" (41%) and where students could suggest topics for discussion (41%) For other race students, "noticing when they are acting upset" (53%) is important. Most students thought that a good advisor would go out of his or her way to "help the student understand his work," but both Hispanic (36%) and other race students

(35%) thought that it was important for a good advisor "to stick up for them at a parent teacher conference" Other race students indicated that it was important to have an advisor that they could "trust with a secret" (41%) and that self-disclosed (35%) It often would take these students a semester (35%) to trust an advisor enough to confide.

Reports of having had the experience of a good advisor varied by racial backgrounds. Asian students reported 100%, black students reported 61%, Hispanic and other race students reported 76%, and 80% of the white students reported having had good advisors The percentage of black students having a good advisor is lower than any other racial category Perhaps some of the black students felt that their advisors had not been appropriate role models for them because most teachers are white middle class females

Socioeconomic status preferences

Socioeconomic status was determined by asking students to report if they received free school lunches reduced priced lunches or regular priced lunches Free lunches were reported by 120 (25%) students reduced by 55 (11%) regular priced lunches by 311 (64%) and 20 (4%) students did not answer the question There were few differences of opinions among the answers of these three groups

Regular priced lunch students stated that a good advisor was "someone that you could tell how you really feel" (36%) "Letting students suggest topics for discussion" was important to 39% of this group Reduced priced (41%) and free (40%) lunch students wanted the advisor to self-disclose Reduced priced

lunch students also wanted to have "things to make or do" (57%) in advisement class

The advisor having a "positive attitude" (39%) and "talking to students regularly" (43%) were important for free lunch students Free lunch students would trust an advisor enough to confide in him or her in one to two weeks (37%) while it would take one to two months for regular (39%) and reduced price (35%) lunch students Only 66% of the free lunch students reported that they have had a good advisor, while reduced price lunch students (76%) and regular priced lunch students (76%) reported they had had a good advisor Perhaps many free lunch students did not readily identify with their advisors because they did not share the middle-class values expressed by their advisors

Number of years in advisement differences

That "a good advisor's classroom has lots of things to do" was most important for students who have been in advisement one (41%) or two (45%) years Sharing information about the advisor is also important to the less experienced advisees (41%) Students who are having their first year of advisement would confide in an advisor in one or two weeks (30%) "Respecting student opinions" was important for second year advisees (40%)

Students who have been in advisement for three years would like "the room arranged for small groups" (45%) Flexibility (41%) is also important for experienced advisees. The second (41%) and third (42%) year advisees would take one or two months to be comfortable in confiding to an advisor It appears

that the longer a student is in advisement the better are the chances of having a good advisor with first year advisees reporting having had good advisors 70% second year advisees 79% and 81% of third year advisees reporting having had a good advisor

Student Responses to Open Ended Survey Question

The following statements are representative of more than 400 written student responses to the open ended survey question "A good advisor for me is one who"

--helps me when I need help and doesn't laugh at me when I make a mistake

--I can trust and believe in

--cares about people has a positive attitude respects people for who they are and is always ready to listen

--shows love for me and my fellow students cares for each and everyone of us.

--is an advisor who cares and doesn't mind to say they're wrong, and is flexible

--takes time to listen and discusss problems that deal with teenage lives and problems that we teenagers face, such as drugs sex peer pressure

--cares about me worries about me when I'm down someone who understands my problems and won't try to parent me all the time

--has respect and listens to kids when they speak has feelings for everybody in the whole class everybody is equal

--respects others' feelings someone who doesn't always act adult doesn't always act like a teacher just a friend

--cares for me, respects me compliments me is enthusiastic has a positive attitude and will make time for me

- notices when I have a problem and cares enough to have me talk about it and also helps me if he can tries to ease my fears

--cares about everyone equally and shows respect for everybody A good advisor has things to do and stuff to talk about everyday

- cares about me and how I feel someone who will listen to me I want a friend at certain times and an advisor at others If the teacher doesn't act like the homeroom is part of a family then it won't feel right

--cares about you even outside the classroom, one who you can bring your troubles to and not worry about being laughed at or anything

- has a sense of humor but yet does not let anyone run over her and also one that likes kids and has respect for kids

--listens to problems and allows small group discussion about the way we feel and lets us be in charge (to a point of course)

--cares for me and who is concerned yet someone who can laugh at jokes and is not always serious! Yet someone who has good ideas to do in class and ideas to help a problem also! A good advisor always listens to your ideas to someone else's problem also!

--is like an older friend not a teacher

Teacher Survey Results

A total of 85 teachers were surveyed at the nine model advisement schools Several of the questions on the teacher survey of advisor effectiveness (Appendix C) were similar to those on the student survey Teacher responses had much more agreement than did the student reponses This perhaps is an indication of a less definitive and more changing levels of thought among middle school students The teacher survey results will be reviewed and then compared with the total student survey results

Of the teachers who served as advisors 88% believed that being "caring and concerned about students" is important for effective advising They stated

that an effective advisor "makes students feel special by listening to what the students say" (67%) An effective advisor "finds time to talk to students privately" (53%) and "celebrates students' birthdays by quietly giving a student a card" (47%) Teachers stated that effective advisors plan for advisement class by "letting the students plan some advisement activities" (58%) Teacher-advisors agreed that when a student has a problem an advisor should "help students think through ways to handle the problem" (69%) Teachers also agreed that an effective advisor "makes sure that everyone feels safe and comfortable in advisement" (55%) "thinks advisement is important" (47%) is "flexible" (79%) "shows that he or she cares" (61%), "shows respect for all students and their opinions" (86%) "plans many different kinds of advisement activities" (52%) and "encourages students to bring up topics for discussion" (52%) The teachers surveyed thought that effective advisors can form positive relationships with students in one or two months (45%) Teachers stated that a good advisement class has "things to make or do" (49%), and that effective advisors would "go out of their way to help advisees understand their schoolwork" (47%) The teachers agreed that "students think a good advisor is someone that they can tell how they really feel" (85%)

Teacher Responses To Open Ended Survey Question

Teachers had many comments on the open-ended survey question Their definition of an effective advisor reflected numerous areas where teachers thought advisors needed to be skilled Many of the skills centered around caring and communicating Several of their answers are recorded here

according to the grade levels taught by these teachers They begin "My

definition of an effective advisor is one who"

--believes that each child is an important person with great qualities. A effective advisor strives to show the students that they are not alone and the experiences they are having are not unique Is a person who can "tell it straight" and not be afraid to show their own human qualities Advisement is a great part of my day--it does not begin with a bell nor end with a bell, but continues the lifetime of my relationship with my advisees (sixth grade)

--leads listens cares and feels for his students He must care enough to impart to his student knowledge and subjects outside normal academics He must be confident of information and feelings, and willing to share his own He must be a trusted friend who guides leads and shares (sixth grade)

--genuinely cares about middle school kids Effective advisors come in all shapes and sizes There is not one way to be effective Students enjoy being in an effective teacher's homeroom and care about their advisor I think this program is crucial to all middle schools! Self esteem is so lacking in adolescents but a positive self esteem is invaluable! I love teaching A/A it's my favorite part of the day! (sixth grade)

--is able to send each child off to their 1st period class with a smile on their face An advisor is a friend to each student who also takes an interest in the students' outside activities (sixth grade)

--assists students in understanding themselves and others and one who helps to provide students with coping strategies for dealing with problems in positive ways This is done not only through advisement class activities, but through the respect and genuine concern for students that the advisor communicates at all times when dealing with students (sixth grade)

--is a sharing and caring individual He/she is one who is able to enhance the emotional social and academic potential of our students Advisement is a special friendly place where students can share emotional and social problems. Students need advisement It is a great program (seventh grade)

cares and is willing to listen to what their students have to say They are flexible and are willing to grow with the students They realize that advisement is an all day all week all month all year endeavor--not just one period three times a week! It is an extremely valuable program that should be implemented throughout schools in the nation at all levels! (seventh grade)

--cares for his students and their concerns He can get students to be open and to discuss what's on their minds Students need to know that the advisor is available to talk with at any time Advisors also need to enjoy their students and to be ready to have fun (eighth grade)

--is patient and understanding and has the ability to understand student concerns and problems He or she must be a person who has the ability to adapt his/her thinking to cope with problems facing today s youth (eighth grade)

--is an effective and active listener displays a caring attitude Is definitely pro-advisement believes in team planning with students activities for advisement is aware of students academic and discipline problems without being judgemental or fostering a dependent relationship with students To enable students to be problem solvers and risk takers to raise students' self-esteem by giving positive comments to be pro-active toward discipline and set clear consistent rules for behavior especially during discussion to be aware of changes in students' behavior or attitude to be aware of middle school culture and what's in (seventh and eighth grade)

--cares and shares with students and yet remains in authority Can talk and interact with advisees and yet direct the process so it doesn t become wasted time An effective advisor is available at additional times Just because a student/students like their advisor doesn t mean they will automatically 'open-up' Successful advisement is based on respect and trust (sixth through eighth grades)

--is aware of childhood developmental issues and facilitative communication skills is concerned about kids and comfortable participating in class discussions about these subjects Facilitative communication skills are a real plus for all advisors (sixth through eighth grades)

--genuinely likes kids and is interested in providing an environment where kids can safely address their concerns (sixth through ninth grades)

Student and Teacher Survey Agreement

Students and teachers agreed in more than half the categories The largest percentage of teachers and students chose the same answer for 9 out of 16 similar questions Teacher (T) and student (S) percentages are listed for each answer in agreement These nine answers are

(e) It is most important for an effective advisor to be caring and concerned about students [question H--T=86% S=69%]

(b) An effective advisor makes students feel special by listening to what students say [question I--T=67% S=42%]

(c) An effective advisor finds time to talk to students privately [question J--T=53% S=47%]

(d) When a student has a problem an effective advisor helps the student think through some possible ways to handle the problem [question M--T=89% S=63%]

(e) A good advisement class should have things to make or do [question O--T=49% S=51%]

(f) An effective advisor would go out of his way to help students understand their schoolwork [question P--T=47% S=39%]

(g) An effective advisor encourages students to bring up topics for discussion [question U--T=52% S=34%]

(h) An effective advisor shows respect for all students and their opinions [question V--T=86% S=52%]

(i) An effective advisor can form positive relationships with most advisees within one to two months [question W--T=45% S=35%]

This agreement indicates that there is a common base of understanding between middle school advisors and advisees at these model advisement schools Such agreement provides a sound basis from which to begin working toward more effective advisement for all students

Teacher and Student Survey Differences

Teachers stated that an effective advisor plans for advisement by "letting students plan some advisory activities" (58%). Although teachers wanted to give students this opportunity to plan advisement, most students preferred to plan activities together with their advisor (44%). Although students think that "treating everyone fairly and equally" is extremely important (64%), teachers thought that "making everyone feel safe and comfortable" (55%) and" treating everyone fairly" (53%) were both important. While teachers tend to think that if advisement is important (47%) it will make them more effective advisors, students think that it is much more important for advisors to "like being with students" (46% versus 18% of the students who stated advisor thinks advisement is important). Advisors stated that "students think a good advisor is one who they can tell how they really feel" (65%) while students stated that the advisors' availability to talk was slightly more important to them (34% versus 32%). Students think it is important for advisors to self-disclose (35%) while 79% of the advisors thought being flexible is most important. One area of minor importance is the difference between the advisors' and advisees' surveys involved the recognition of special events like an advisees birthday. Teachers thought an effective advisor would "quietly give a student a card" (47%) but only 18% of the students chose this option with most students preferring that the class sing "Happy Birthday" (40%). Teachers indicated that "showing you care" is very important (61%) while students indicated that "caring (35%) and a positive attitude" (36%) are both important for an effective advisor.

Finally teachers rated themselves as excellent advisors 25% and good advisors 73% for a total of 98% positive responses Students indicated having had a good advisor 75% and not having a good advisor 17%

CHAPTER V

FINDINGS RESULTS FROM INTERVIEWS

Student Interview Findings

The interview process was designed to gather additional in-depth information about student and teacher ideas on effective advisors The interviews were semi structured and used an interview guide (Appendix E) Spradley (1979) states that three types of questions should be used in an interview They are descriptive -used to sample the informants language structural--used to find out how informants organize knowledge and contrast--used to discover the dimensions of meaning informants employ Examples of each type of question from the student interview probes used in this study could include (a) descriptive- Question 9 Tell me about advisement activities in a good advisor's class (b) structural--Question 17 If you could design the "perfect advisor" what would be the most important characteristics of your advisor?, (c) contrast- Question 21 Is the good advisor's classroom any different from other classrooms? How?

How the questions were asked was adjusted according to responses of the students. For example if Question 3 "How does a good advisor show his or her concern about you?," elicited a response about understanding that was fully explained then Question 5 "How does a good advisor show he or she understands students? " might have been eliminated

Additionally students were usually available for interviewing only during one class period of approximately 45 minutes When time was short some interview questions that students might take to be similar were eliminated such as Question 20 "What does a good advisor do to help you trust him or her?" or Question 22 "What makes you feel connected with this person who is a good advisor?"

Twenty-three interviews were conducted with 123 middle school students in small groups of one to nine students at nine Model Advisement Schools located throughout the state of Florida Although the small group format provided lively interaction among the students during the interviews and 222 pages of single-spaced transcription it was not conducive to lengthy in-depth testimonial types of responses by students about their personal relationships with effective advisors Part of this lack of depth also may be due to the transescent nature According to Thornburg (1988) "Adolescents do not usually think about larger issues and when they do their reflections tend to be personal and immediate rather than abstract and general" (p 175) Student responses nevertheless did provide many insights into students' perspectives on effective advising

Concerned Advisors

On the survey students reported that they wanted advisors who were caring and concerned about students During the semi-structured interviews students were questioned about how a good advisor shows that he or she is concerned about students. Students suggested several ways that advisors

show concern

Becky--"They'll see when your grades start dropping They'll go 'Now you've got to straighten up or you're fixin to get a low grade.'"

Elijah--"They care when they don't have to- sometimes it's an issue that they don't have to pay any attention to and they do They care."

Lauren--"You can tell if they are concerned because they make it a point to find out if something is wrong with you."

Elijah--"They help us learn how to take care of problems even outside of school problems."

Adrian--"if you're doing bad they talk to you and tell you good things until you feel better."

Daniel--"You see them really on your case then you know they really are trying Most of the time they are on our case."

Philip--"We always write in our journals but afterwards we talk about what we wrote and sometimes we talk the whole class period long That shows that he's concerned about what we think."

Chris--"When you go up there without raising your hand and the advisor really looks at you and is listening to what you say not just keep writing or tell you to go back and raise your hand of something then you know they care."

Francis--"I think a good concerned advisor will look at a student as a human being type of thing, like they see our point of view Instead of just as a student type of thing."

Kate "Once this girl stood up and said it was about school that there were so many cliques It's amazing we just talked about it for the whole period That showed that the advisor was concerned by taking time to work things out even though it wasn't in the A/A book."

Chris--"If I am acting different in advisement he knows something is wrong He'll go outside and he'll try to talk to me He like says 'I'm not just your teacher I'm your friend' And I'll tell him."

Lolf--"So long as the teacher advisor cares about us they can each have their own way to show us they care

Eldridge describes a student's view of the need for teachers to assume the counseling role of advisors.

> Our advisor is a lot more closer to us than a guidance counselor because she be's [sic] there more It we need anything and a guidance counselor is way up there and has a lot of work to do Sometimes the counselor don't have enough time to come and talk to us and we have to come back later on in the day Our advisor she is right there waiting for us to come and talk to her and she sees what's on our minds and stuff

Students think that good advisors show caring and concern by noticing when students are feeling unhappy or their grades are beginning to drop Concerned advisors really listen to what students have to say and are interested in the concerns of students Good advisors try to help students or find someone who can help with the students' problems. They are interested in students and ask students' opinions These are some of the ways advisors express concern according to their advisees

Student Problems

Several of the students commented on what they want advisors to do if they are having a problem Their comments reflected thinking similar to that of showing concern Students wanted their advisors to notice if the student is feeling upset to listen to try to help to contribute some ideas to speak to the student privately and to keep the problem confidential

Sharon--"I'd like them to listen to me and try to get suggestions about how I can handle the problem "

Ashley--"Most of my friends and I we just like them to listen most of the time Get it off our shoulders Just know that they're listening and that they care "

Ian--"Well I think they should talk with them about it or go out of their way to help them And if they can't help them then the advisor should tell them someone they can go to that can help them with their problem "

Chris--"Sometimes they go to talk to the principal about my behavior or go talk to a teacher that I had a problem with and try to work it out "

Jamie--"Well some of your friends they like to make fun of you a lot and you know they are just kidding but inside you think they are telling the truth You like want to go to a friend and tell them but you know he'll tell everybody and then everybody will make fun of you So you want an advisor to be your friend who will listen to you and not go tell everybody You need to know that they can keep something private "

David points out a further problem with depending on friends for advising

"Most people before they go to a teacher they normally turn to their friends And if you have a problem you'd probably talk to your friend and they try to help you out with your problem But the thing is sometimes your friends can't help you as much as you need Some kids don't realize that and so they keep the problem "

Trust is a factor in students being willing to share their concerns with an advisor Students expressed various opinions on what it takes for them to trust an advisor

Chris--"It doesn't take that long cause I know I can trust a teacher "

Jacquelyn--"It would depend on their personality and how long it takes them to trust you to trust them "

Justin --"I'll talk to a man or lady teacher as long as I can tell them and they'll respect what I am saying and they know it's confidential cause I have some problems with the family I tell a teacher that I don't want them to slip and tell someone else I just want to be able to trust them and they give me the proper advice "

Adnan--"To be trusted an advisor needs to be honest and tell the truth "

Vicky- "It might depend on your past and it kinda depends on what you know about them and then you decide if you can trust them "

Pat--"Once you can start joking with them talking to them really like a friend then you know you can trust them."

Sharon--"It would probably take me a week to get to know the person to see what kind of person they are and find out from other people to see if they would trust them enough to tell them something." It seems that advisors build a reputation among students.

James--"I've had the same advisement teacher since sixth grade and I'm in eighth grade now and I still don't trust him."

Trust in sharing confidences with an adult depends on the students' experiences past and present, how much time they spend with the advisor, and how the students feel they can relate to that person as well as how much students think the advisor has trust in them.

Academic Advising

One of the roles of an advisor is to help students do their best academically. Students saw this as a very important aspect of their relationship with their advisors, and they thought teachers could help by giving hints, extra assistance, encouraging students, and staying on their cases if that was needed.

Brian--"He can give you hints, like somethings he might know about other teachers."

Frank--"They could give you some tips, extra short cuts and still come up with the right answers."

Jill--"They can put in a good recommendation for you with other teachers."

Carrie--"We do reading on Monday and Friday and he got it to where it was fun. He didn't borrow books from the media center, he brought in these books. They're real books by original authors only they've been put into a comic strip form. There's like a set of them that we use. I've already read about five or six books that I normally wouldn't read. Originally the books are about this thick, you know, and now they're like so thin and only a few pages."

Chris--"When the whole group has problems with their homework she'll make up a game with the homework and we have to play it so we can kinda grasp what it is that we gotta learn "

Sharon--"They could encourage you to do your homework Like say 'If you do this you'll get a gooder grade and then give you verbal praise when you do good "

Advisees in Trouble

Students had mixed reactions to their advisors becoming involved if they were in discipline trouble.

Ryan- "It she's gonna help you yea, if she isn't no "

Elijah--"It's always better if a teacher helps "

Colleen--"My advisor is the most understanding person you ever met and I tell her almost everything that goes on If she wanted to get involved cause she thought she needed to or cause she wanted to I wouldn't mind She would understand even if it was me in the wrong she would still understand and still help "

Chris--"No if the advisor wasn t part of it I wouldn't want her involved because she'd think lower of me "

Adrian- "I'd want my advisor to stick up for me in a parent-teacher conference so I wouldn't be so nervous "

Advisement Activities

Advisors often express concern about what kinds of activities students enjoy in advisement The interviewees provided these suggestions parties acting out plays movies games computers doing puzzles or puzzle worksheets going on field trips sitting around and having discussions letting students have time to talk to friends having a guest speaker current events trivial pursuit rewards special activities like basketball games or fashion shows making things (like family trees decorating the room) contests study

time talking to the advisor individually doing the advisement lesson outside student choice about what to do interest groups school or community service projects cooperative learning activities, team activities writing in journals Kids Book of Questions, and just listening to what others think

Elijah--"I like to do whatever the advisor asks us to do I like advisement because it gives you an education about what's going on in the world not just in school "

Vanessa- "We talk about problems we deal with everyday things we should watch out for "

Ken--"Maybe the advisor could be enthusiastic in what he is doing "

Tiffany--"If they make up a games, it makes it funner to learn "

Pat--"I like parties and free days "

When the students were questioned about where the money for parties should come from they had the following ideas

Frank--"Maybe it should come from the school safe "

Brian--"Students could sell stuff like sell candy to get money for a pizza party"

Jill--"Maybe it could come from the teachers' pockets if they think you've been good Good advisors give parties Or maybe in lunch the advisor could take their advisees out of the cafeteria and let them eat lunch in the classroom It would be sort of like a party "

Lawana--"I like advisement when everybody sits around and talks about how they feel and stuff"

Allison--"My advisor sets us in a big circle and then we talk about problems what makes students uncomfortable when they come to school or mad Then we talk and try to work out our problems."

Sherry -"My advisor is good she talks about how we feel but it's not just doing that all the time She has a sense of humor and we can all laugh with her

and she doesn't get angry and stuff Like if you have your own opinion speaking about it and she just listens to you and then all the kids talk about it all together "

Alicia-- "I think cooperative learning when you re working with a group of people and doing different activities like talking things over sharing different experiences is good That's what we usually do for A/A and that s kinda fun and then we put on these little skits "

Joanne--"Sometimes depending on the weather we go outside and have a lesson It's fun like that "

Angela--"Coming towards Christmas, we helped the little elementary school raise money And we went out and bought the kids presents and stuff that they needed for Christmas They probably wouldn't have gotten any if we didn t help them So we like to help other people that are gonna be coming to our school "

Jamie-- "The advisor gives us good topics to write or talk about not boring ones"

And how does the good advisor know which topics are good ones?

Alvin - Good topics relate to us and everything that is happening to us If advisors hear a student talking about it or something they might find out about what are good topics"

Advisee Participation

Getting students involved in advisement activities often depends on the students thinking that the topic is relevant but the interviewed students had additional ideas to encourage advisee participation

Lawana--"When we re like doing a play or something she'll start and then everyone starts moaning and groaning and things like that She'll say if we give her some time then if we have any time left over when we get through well she'll give us free time or time to go on the computer Then everybody starts to hurry up and get involved"

Alfre--"I like advisors that let us do things we like to do Like certain days we can choose what we want to do Then we'll do what she wants us to do "

Jamie--"It students don't like it or whatever you know advisors should put it in a way that will make you like it or make it more interesting."

And of course students also had suggestions for how to make it more interesting.

Ian--"Our homeroom teacher when we're like bored she does something funny or tries to make us laugh."

Beth--"She makes it fun she'll put you in a group so that just makes it fun."

Brian--"Every once in a while like one day in a week advisors would let the kids pick what they want to do."

Lauren--"Advisors can make it like games and make it fun. Do games and things just to do something to get your mind off school."

Elijah--"Good advisors show enthusiasm. They ask everybody questions to get them involved."

Chris--"Advisors should get excited about advisement. "They should be enthusiastic. They are like 'Oh it's gonna be so fun.'"

Joanne--"My homeroom teacher makes it so fun on the other days that we all look forward to our advisor/advisee time. Like on Monday we have free time to do whatever we want or homework or whatever. Fridays we have games. It is like a little party day."

Eric--"Students get involved in advisement if a teacher rewards the people who participate."

Chris--"She threatens us and that's the way to do it."

Jamie reminded advisors that they should not give up on students.

"To get the student that doesn't want to participate involved the advisor trys to try harder and harder to get him to feel that he can talk to the advisor and that you understand him. We have a couple in our homeroom that don't want to participate. They are always yelling and cheating when we do games. If they would just relax and act how they should maybe it would be easier on themselves than they think it is. But the advisors need to try and try until they reach them."

So to get students involved and participating in advisement the students interviewed suggested rewards, enthusiasm, games, groups, giving students choices about activities and topics, and to keep trying with those who do not respond.

Advisee Conduct

Controlling student behavior in a class where no grades are given (except in one of the schools studied) is another concern of many advisors.

Elijah--"It the advisor goes around showing a good attitude, the kids will have a good attitude, because that's the way most people do."

Vanessa--"I think they should set some rules and then if the kids don't follow them they should penalize them. The same rules should apply to everyone. You shouldn't have 50 rules, like you have in the rest of your classes. You should have less strong rules. Rules that help students, not suspend them."

Francis--"It's not fair to yell at people in front of everyone and its so humiliating in front of all our friends. So like they should do it privately or try to distract what is wrong before they go overboard."

Vanessa--"If a student talks and you say 'Ok, be quiet' and they continue doing this then you just take them outside. You shouldn't make them feel bad in front of the class because if you do this during advisement they aren't going to like A/A. They are going to say, 'My advisor is a boring teacher and is always picking on me.' The students will say, 'Oh the advisor is going to make fun of me.' That's what keeps a student closed and not wanting to open up in advisement."

Tiffany--"My homeroom teacher, we were having this problem about everyone talking, getting rowdy. So she really became concerned cause she doesn't want to take our advantages away. So she talks to us about it. She says, 'What do you think we should do?'"

Daniel--"Advisors should give you a warning and if it's really bad, send you to the office. Advisors need to tell you firmly, but in a nice way. Instead of all serious and yelling."

Chris--"Stay calm. She should punish the kid that's bad."

When asked how the advisor would know who did it he stated

"Someone would tell people tell things like that"

Handling put-downs

Put downs are often a problem with middle schoolers. Students offer techniques for discouraging this behavior

Dennie--"If your advisors cared about you they wouldn't let you cut each other down"

Beth--"In our class put-downs aren't allowed You get in serious trouble and usually she like if it is really bad she'll tell them to go outside the door We know put-downs aren't allowed but even though it's one person she'll give us a lecture for about five minutes"

Hillary--"For every bad thing we say about someone we have to say two good things about them So it all ends up everybody's laughing"

Gary- "Let them think about it and see how they feel Give them ten minutes of silence or something"

Lawenda thought the advisor should make them apologize but Gary disagrees--"I don't think a teacher should make a kid apologize I think they should apologize on their own without the teacher because I mean if somebody put me down and a teacher said 'Now apologize' It wouldn't do anything for me So why waste your breath"

Sabrina--"The kind of kid that says put-downs is the one who needs the most help The advisor should take them aside and shouldn't embarrass them in front of the whole class"

Vanessa- "The kids treat the advisor like they want to be treated so if the teacher be nice the kids would probably be nice too"

Advisor Appearance

When asked how a good advisor looks students tended to react with a response that indicated that it was a ridiculous question But with a little time to think students were able to describe a good advisor

Adrian--"It doesn't matter what they look like as long as they're good advisors."

James--"They could look like the wicked witch of the east but just be nice."

Brian--"It doesn't matter what he looks like young or old, but it matters like if he's up to date and he knows what you're talking about If he didn't understand what a word meant he could ask just as long as he didn't make fun of it."

Janet--"I don't think it's how they look or how old they are it depends on how they help you and their attitude if it is always friendly."

Becky--"They gotta act like they're really having fun doing what we're doing Yes even if they aren't."

David-"I think good advisors wear sweat pants on Friday so they can play with us instead of worrying about everything Good advisors show they like to be with kids They participate with them."

Sharon--"Somebody that looks like they understand whenever you are talking about a topic They really listen to what kids are saying good eye contact and stuff."

Alicia--"Always smiling cheerful I think the advisor has to have a positive attitude."

Students want an advisor that smiles who shows interest in them is fun to be around has a positive attitude listens and participates sometimes

Advisory Classrooms

According to the students interviewed a good advisor's classroom is organized cheerful personalized and relaxed

Frank--"An advisor decorates any way she wants to maybe because the way a person dresses or decorates shows her personality or something."

Lela -"Our teacher has an advisor/advisee alphabet on the wall And when she puts up our stuff you know that she appreciates what we did."

Arthur--"A good advisor has stuff like if you have a problem they have stuff like that you can read "

Chris--"She ll hang up posters and pictures about the lesson we are doing and like we can get more information about it "

Sharon--"A good advisor's room should look like cheerful and colorful and like kids playing games or something A not so good advisor's room looks kinda like all the other classrooms with all the rules hanging off the walls and all the kids doing work "

Keshia--"You see the classroom everyday It doesn t matter what the classroom looks like it s the teacher that makes the difference "

Pat--"A good advisor makes the atmosphere better It looks happy and so people are happy when they are in there "

Advisor Statements

When asked if there are somethings that good advisors would say to students, the following quotes were representative of student answers

Adrian -"You re doing very good in school "

Chris--"How are your grades going? How ya doing?"

Frank--"Have a nice weekend see ya Monday "

Ian--"You can do it. Don t give up because if you do you ll never be able to do it "

Jill--"It does not matter if they really mean it or not as long as they are trying to make students feel good and the advisor is a good actor "

Joanne--"My homeroom teacher sometimes I pass by him in the hall and he s talking to other teachers and I overhear him say like after Christmas vacation that he missed us kids and he was happy to come back to school."

Dislikes About Advisors

There were also some things that students did not like about advisors These included advisors who yelled lectured would not listen to students favored some students would not let students talk, picked boring advisement

topics made students do dittoes or planned for their next academic class

during advisement.

Vicky--"I don't like it when they make you sit there You want to get up and you want to talk because that's our time to talk But they make us sit there and be quiet and listen to them without talking "

Jill--"My advisement teacher yells at us alot of times like if someone gets out of their seat she starts yelling It doesn't start the day off right "

Ian--"I don t like it when in the mornings we have to do our advisement book activities because some kids always have their homework to do It's just that the questions are always the same all the time There are no exciting activities you can do in that book "

Emily-- "I always thought advisor/advisee should be like where the kids can talk to the teacher if they want to about the problems they are having But our advisor teacher always takes out the advisor/advisee book and sometimes she ll just read straight out of it And if somebody wants to say something she like won't let them and by the time the teacher is done the whole class period is over So the kids won t get a chance and the advisor doesn't act concerned about the kids problems She's just concerned about reading the book which nobody pays attention to because it is not I mean they make it so boring nobody listens to it "

Jackie-"Advisement teacher shouldn t be sarcastic or put other students down even if they're doing it like a joke "

Emily-"Advisement is supposed to be our special time not the teacher's time to worry about her things like what she is going to do in the rest of her classes all day "

Frankie-"Especially I don t like it when they yell at you "

Perfect Advisors

Students described what characteristics they would want in their perfect

advisor

Joanna--"I d make my perfect advisor cheerful happy and willing to talk to kids "

Pat--"I would want an advisor to be able to make people laugh to make

life seem easier."

Jamie--"It's a lot of things but mostly it could be their attitude. A lot of it is wrapped up in attitude."

Lauren--"The perfect advisor has the ability to listen good."

Elijah--"They need to be willing to go out of their way to help you."

Lauren--"Someone that is honest and acts concerned about how you feel."

Lawana--"An advisor that asks your opinion would be perfect."

Colleen--"They need to be respectful of others."

Brian--"I want my perfect advisor to be nice. If you ask a question the advisor won't ignore you. If you ask for help with homework, the advisor helps you. And the advisor is fun. And fun is like if you ask them to have a party, they discuss it with you and maybe have a vote on who wants to have a party, and stuff like that."

Alicia--"Some kids like they don't have a good family at home. Maybe they feel like they can't talk to their moms and dads and maybe the advisor is the person they feel they can really talk to. So I think that it is important for that advisor to be a really good role model to some kids maybe it's like taking the place of a parent."

Advice to Advisors from Advisees

There was much advice for advisors and for advisement classes from the students interviewed. Some of it has already been mentioned in the previous paragraphs, but the student's own words provide a practical suggestion list for advisors.

Lauren- "Just make sure they communicate with you if you have a problem."

Jennifer -"An advisor should be someone you could describe your problems to, someoody you could trust. It would be like a friendship."

Holly--"Advisors should think about things from a student's point of view."

Gary--"Advisors need to ask our opinions "

James--"Kids need someone to explain things to them explain everything Advisors need small classes to do this. To get to know advisees advisors could have private kinds of discussions with each one "

Adrien--"Don't yell at you say nice things Basically be like one of my friends Just be nice be cool like not always get mad "

Ryan--"Advisors should just be themselves "

Chris--"Hang around kids and say 'hi' Don't make fun of people And be sure advisees are getting good grades Check to see how they are doing "

Frank--"A good advisor jokes around with you and you joke around with him but he is serious when he s teaching advisement "

Jill--"Be sure not to have any teacher's pets "

Katy--"Advisors should concentrate more on what you are doing right than on what you are doing wrong "

Deanna--"I would say involvement is important Get involved with the advisees They know what s going on in our generation "

Pat--"I'd went advisors to respect us and give us respect That way the kids will have more respect for them and then they can understand what we are going through "

Matt--"Show the students that they have time for you Sharing things about themselves is important to build a relationship "

David--"Just care about kids and be more of a role model Open up more about themselves understand more Don t be stiff don t be breakable "

Brian--"Chill out don t be so uptight "

Frank- "Loosen up Just kick back and have some fun. Sometimes still be firm but let us have some leeway sometimes "

Mara--"Tell advisors to pay attention to kids and not just sit there with a blah expression on their face Tune in to what the kids are saying And if the kids have ideas try them and try to find a way to make them work Then kids will work better for advisors."

Vannessa--"I think they should ask kids because sometimes when one kid is having a problem sometimes there are several kids that have the same problem "

Joseph -"Teachers should always come to school with a good attitude so the student knows Oh the teacher is having a good day and I'm gonna have a good day too' They should never come to school with a bad attitude "

Jessica--"No teacher is perfect nobody is perfect One day they are gonna be in a bad mood Maybe they could get into a little group and they could say 'I didn't have a good day I had to pick up the house and the kids were running around Maybe we'd feel more open with them and be able to tell them Oh yea me too I had to pick up after my little brother' and stuff like that Because nobody is perfect you know they have problems too

Hillary--"Just cause they have different interests than you and are from another generation they should not say like Oh when I was your age when I was young I didn't get this and we thought this and that ' I think they should be able to compromise with your ideas "

Eldridge -"Treat us like the age we are, not make us feel little.

Chris--"A/A teachers should include everybody "

Alicia--"Praise all the children Not always have one person in the spotlight even if they might be really good Some teachers say so and so is perfect and sometimes the other kids it makes them kind of afraid of that person not be their friend and call them goody goody' or teacher's pet And also when the teacher says that you're perfect and then that makes you feel like you have to live up to that If you make one misteke you feel like you don't have the teacher s respect anymore "

Jessica--"I'll tell you something I like in an advisor You know some people tell you 'How are you doing? You having a nice day?' and they'll go to another person, 'How are you doing?' They are like a computer They are saying the same thing It makes you feel like she doesn't really care. She s just telling me that because she has to that's her job They should ask different things like out of the heart something individual Like at the beginning of the year they should watch the kids and get to know how to talk to them differently and things like that Like say Your nails are painted new The littlest things make people happy Oh you got new earrings on When did you get those?' That makes me happy when you say it with a smile on your face Or like if you have a bad day Gosh you're the only one that noticed That makes me feel good You noticed--Thank you "

Pat--' Not always have to be right

Joanne--"Do advisor/advisee not because they have to but because they want to for you "

Ian -"I'd like to tell advisors they should keep on trying Even how bad kids are in today s century each century kids are going to get worse and worse You shouldn't give up on helping them with their problems and not stop giving them advice Keep on giving them advice so they can keep going on Keep encouraging them encourage them to be something "

Students expect a lot from advisors But they also includad suggestions

in their interviews about how to improve advisement classes

Chris-"Teachers should do what they are assigned to do during advisement "

Emily-- Remember that a/a is our time They need to listen to us and not worry about rushing through this stuff so they can get it done so that they can do whatever the teacher needs to do "

Lawane--"Get more activities and more topics "

Colleen--"Sometimes teachers should want to sit down and participate in advisement with us "

Lakisha--"I think they should ask us what we want to do "

Allison--"Do less work do more fun things Try to make assignments more fun so it's more interesting Advisors could ask students to write down what they want to do and then discuss it with us."

Sabrina--"Good advisors should first ask a person a student what's their opinion and let the class discuss it They they ask another person's opinion and discuss it again or they should just let the student say his opinion If you have a student giving feedback then advisement will always come out right. It s not always boring "

Robert--"i think what would make them better advisors is that most of the things they do are from their minds, their imagination their opinions And I think that most of the things an advisor team or teacher should do is like take things from the kids and see what the kids want to do '

Daniel--"We like to work with things we relate to not like adults relate to we relate to "

Tiffany--"A/A is really boring because we talk about subjects like don't talk to strangers and those things are getting so old So I think what they should do is everyday like sit in a circle or something and have one person that's really concerned about a certain subject open up the subject and everybody state their opinion and get it out I think kids would do that if it's a subject they really want to talk about One day just have the class write what would be good things to talk about and put them in a hat and the day they are going to get a chance to talk about what they want just pull it out of the hat That would work better because sometimes we have a question or something that we don't want to ask because everybody will think it's stupid and they'll be embarrassed "

David--"Games are good but it has to be an informative game It s neat to have fun but it is also neat to have it that you are learning "

Donna--"Do something special like cookouts or parties not just sit around in homeroom and do nothing plan something extra curricular together "

Pat -"If advisors do things outside of class like chaperoning a school dance it shows they care alot Even when they're actually chaperoning they are still fun to be with They help us plan for dances or decorate help make props for the plays They show that they will help and they are taking their own time "

Frank--"Every year you switch teachers like math English and all that It should be the same thing for advisors Not have the same advisor every year you are here It gets boring "

Natasha -"My advisor was fun She followed the book that they gave us and she made the discussions interesting She was creative with the stuff in the book "

Chris--"If a good advisor doesn t like the lesson we re doing for the day she ll change it around a little bit "

Francis--"Be sure that communication between the teacher and students is there and everything else will be o k "

James--"Tell some of the teachers that they need to get a new job "

Good Advisors

The students interviewed agreed that good advisors care help listen

Good advisors are themselves are friendly are patient are interested in the

students' world and do "fun" things

Andrea--"Good advisors they care bad ones they don't care If you have a problem at home good advisors will let you talk to them and they try to help the situation out."

Ian -"I'd say a good advisor would be the one that listens to your problems a poor one would be one that doesn't know how to help someone with their problems or has no ideas to help them doesn't have a clue what to do "

Ashley--"A poor advisor usually doesn't have enough patience to listen to your problems A good one always has time and always listens and is willing to help "

Tiffany--"I think advisors should put themselves in our shoes and just remember how they wanted to talk and what their problems were when they were our age They need to communicate with us more Some teachers are your teacher inside and then outside they are your friend Some teachers are just teachers and then nothing on the outside It's really important to communicate "

Terry--"Good advisors help you out with your grades They tell you what you need to do "

Colleen-- 'Good advisors talk to you politely "

David--"Good advisors push you to do stuff like try new things. They have confidence in you "

Jessica- "I think what makes a good advisor is somebody who is caring patient with you and listens to what you have to say and talks to you about problems what is going on in the world and stuff like that A good advisor is not just someone who is going to be boring and make you sit there and say 'Oh here is your handout do this "

Francis--"I think a good advisor has a friendly attitude towards us not like straight forward talk (lecture) but be real casual and friendly I always like that in an advisor "

Sherry--"Good advisors are like a friend Sometimes they act grown up if you're talking about certain subjects Sometimes they don t take things real seriously they can have you laugh at things too They put a/a subjects in two ways, two perspectives, a fun way and a serious way

Carrie--"Good advisors will kid around with you depending on the topic of concern. If you re an addicted smoker or alcoholic he'll try and help you He

won't kid around He'll say, ' You do know that this is not healthy for you ' and he'll show you bad points He'll say 'This is just between me and you and no one else is going to know I'm here to help you '"

Phillip--"Good advisors are interested in what you say "

Mica--"A good advisor can be any sex or any color It doesn't matter as long as their personality is good and they teach and they understand people and they never treat anyone better than the next person "

Travis--"Good advisors do fun things to make you want to learn about a/a "

Teacher Interview Findings

There were 21 teacher advisors interviewed at nine model advisement schools. All the teachers were interviewed individually except for two sixth grade teachers who asked to be interviewed together at School H All interviews except one, which was also at School H were audio tape recorded and later transcribed Teachers were interviewed in their classrooms in offices in teachers lounges and in media centers All teachers were cooperative and seemed eager to share their views Teachers who were interviewed were identified by students either on the surveys or during interviews as effective advisors. The advisement coordinator at each school arranged to have teachers' classes covered while they were interviewed or the teachers agreed to be interviewed during their lunch or planning period

Patton (1980) describes a sequence for interviewing that included (a) an opening statement--an interview introduction was used in these interviews Appendix E (b) descriptive questions with probes--such as Question 1 "Could you please tell me about your relationship with your advisees?" or Question 2 "What works for you in building positive relationships with your

middle school advisees?", (c) questions about past and future such as Question 5 "If a new teacher joined your team what would you tell him/her about the role of teacher-advisor?" (d) demographic questions asked throughout- such as "What grade do you teach?" "How long have you been a teacher-advisor?"

This basic interviewing sequence was followed The semistructured interview allowed for flexibility to adjust to the time space and personality contexts of each interview

Building Relationships with Advisees

Teacher advisors were aware of the difficulties of building positive relationships with middle school students They expressed an understanding of the individual needs of students and the importance of communication skills Teachers used caring openness, humor availability and the creation of a "safe space' to build positive relationships with advisees

Mrs W- "I think that I am successful as an advisor because the kids understand that I care about them and that their success is my ultimate goal Beyond that I am a very good listener and I expect respect from the students and the way that I get that is that I respect them in return So I think that generally the kids feel pretty comfortable coming to me with problems if they should have some'

Mrs D--"All the advisees are unique individuals and they all have to be looked at as part of the group and as an individual Fortunately sometimes you can find time for the individual during some group activities "

Mr H- "I To allow each one to be themselves for some amount of time Is important I have to think about what I can do what way can I reach each one "

Mrs. M--"I think they all basically need that same feeling of belonging somewhere to feel special to know and feel confident but I think they all respond differently to the activities."

Mr. B--"I try to find some humor in everything and most of the kids will tell you that I enjoy coming to this class. We try to make it as enjoyable as possible. I think humor is the key to trying to make advisement different, not so serious all the time."

Mr. D--"Talking to kids and being available to listen is very important. It doesn't happen overnight. It's a long term deal."

Mrs. M and D--"Because you are not having to deal with advisees on subject matter specifically, you have time to sit down with them and say 'Look what's going on at home or so what did you do over the weekend?' You have more openness. You can tell them when you're having a bad day. You have more time to get to know them and they can get to know you."

Mr. S--"Our relationship is quite open. We enjoy each other most of the time. We set up what we call a 'safe space.' Anything can be discussed here and nothing discussed here should leave this room."

Mr. C--"I like to have all types of communication with kids: verbal, written, touching and I really feel strongly about that, but obviously I can't. I hold back on the touching."

Most Important Advisor Skill

According to effective advisors the most important skills for advisors are caring, listening, accepting, empathy, and enjoying the students. Most of the advisors interviewed expressed their thoughts about the most important advisor skill or characteristic in concise statements.

Mrs. W--"Know your students and care about them."

Mrs. J--"Be willing to listen. You need to listen with all your senses, and with your eyes and your body language."

Mrs. B--"Be active with the advisees, free."

Mrs. D--"You have to like children. If you don't, get outta here."

Mrs M--"You have to be a good listener and be enthusiastic about advisement But I think that the important thing is to have solid materials there to hand them rather than some abstract idea of what s going on "

Mr D -"The most important skill for advisors is communication And attitude change would be helpful for many "

Mr S -"Be open and accepting "

Mrs C--"Have fun enjoy the children "

Mr C--"It comes from the heart not from the brain That s the real difference if advisement is effective "

Mrs R--"I think they need to be energetic and be young at heart They don't have to be young in years They have to be able to put themselves on the kids level and remember when they were in their middle school years "

Teacher Versus Advisor Skills

When asked if the skills for teaching and advising were the same the effective teacher-advisors that were interviewed had mixed reactions.

Mrs J -"No way I've seen wonderful teachers that are lousy advisors And it's not that they are lousy advisors, it s just that they feel that it is not their job and they re not prepared for it "

Mrs J--"I see an effective teacher as one that can be flexible and can relate to kids and understand But I found that even the good teachers are not always good advisors It is different to relate in an effective way as a teacher and an affective way as an advisor It s hard because it e teacher is not empathetic I can't make you empathetic "

Mrs M--"I think they are the same In the a/a environment you can relax a little You can let them see you as a real person Sometimes in the academic sense you have to be kind of cut and dry where the kids wonder if you eat and sleep So I think advisement is a more relaxed atmosphere but I think those qualities have to be there when you teach too If you were a grump all day and then went into advisement and became this wonderful friendly person I don't think this would be effective "

Mr D--"I have a hard time distinquishing between teacher and advisor, especially at middle school Let s face it you have to deal with the kids personally you have to gain their respect and if you do that then you can teach them anything First of all we have to be caring people "

Training for Advisor

Although the interviewed middle school teacher-advisors thought that much of the skill needed for teachers to become effective advisors was influenced by teachers attitudes toward advisement they also expressed that training such as workshops inservice and courses that taught communication skills developmental characteristics of transescents and shared successful ideas among teachers were helpful

Mrs. W--"I think that everyone can be a better communicator with some training As far as being concerned and compassionate and caring those types of things are such a part of your personality I don't know that you can receive a whole lot of training But through observation and through learning about individual kids and where they are coming from and asking questions so that you have a deeper understanding teachers can become better advisors Everyone can do that "

Mrs B--"I think some of the techniques can be learned I think the teacher needs to be comfortable with what they are doing and the kids need to be comfortable too The advisor needs to be sitting in the chair participating not at the desk The skills for socializing with kids can be learned so that you start developing an empathy and a feel because that is how the kids learn to be empathetic to each other through the games and the role modeling So if the teacher is effective with structured activities do something everyone is comfortable with But sometimes the structured activities still make advisors seem like teachers to the kids. They need to see their advisors on a different plane "

Mr S --"The best course I had was one that dealt with what the young adolescent is like the characteristics and such things I think that advisor skills can be learned I think it's easier for some people to learn them It depends on how they grew up whether they were in a parental relationship or a student-teacher relationship where there was openness and honesty so they have something to base it on Then it is easier for them to learn where to draw the line They also have to study themselves so they know what they are comfortable discussing and what areas they can't what areas they are knowledgeable about what preconceptions they may have what biases they have They have to build on the trust within their team to be able to share some of those things and work on them "

Mrs C--"I wish we had more workshops available to us with different kinds of methodologies Sharing between teachers is also good Last year we each brought in our best idea that worked in a/a and shared it. The teachers came up with ideas that worked extremely well And the only way to get teachers really comfortable with doing those kinds of a/a activities is to have them do them And then they say Wow is this really fun if I can do this here I can do this with students' Some people feel that advising is really a counseling kind of thing and they are not qualified to be counselors and there's resistance There need to be steps along the way to help them feel more comfortable and more willing to risk trying new things Advisement is a skill that is learned it's not something natural you do It feels good to learn it too "

Advisory Activities That Work

The advisors interviewed had many ideas about advisory activities that worked for them Many of the activities involved student input into the types of activities they liked Teachers also stressed the need for the advisor to feel comfortable with the activities in their advisement class Many of the effective advisors had discovered activities that worked well for them and so they no longer chose to use the book of advisement activities provided to them They covered the advisement topics in their own ways

Mrs W--"We do a wide range of activities Some of them are lessons in positive peer interactions or family relationships problem solving and decision making It's generally a combination of discussion and activity we'll play something These activities and discussions are good and I think they are an essential part of an a/a program But we use that time for other things too Perhaps things that don't fit into an academic day for example for holidays we might just do something special We might also use the time to supplement some of what we do in academic classes things that we would like to do but are difficult in a large group of students "

Mrs B--"Well we started off the first year with activities and the kids got tired of them and so I stopped and said to the kids What would you like to do?' and we did a quality circle The kids expressed their views and the things they like and didn't like Our compromise was that we would try everything If we didn't like it we'd stop and the time was theirs They were 6th grade last year and they didn't care about homework This year they are spending alot more time on homework in advisement They expressed that they are teenagers they want to share first thing in the morning things that happened over night and

they like having this free time to talk. The open kind of thing allows some of them to sit up at my desk and hold conversations, others like the animals. Some share, some don't do anything, some don't want to talk and just sit in a corner by themselves. They are really into homework, and it's like don't bother me."

Mrs. B--"They like the current issues. They don't like paper and pencil activities regardless of how fun they are. They like the in-school TV newscast, especially if they think some of their friends are gonna be on, you get them paying attention to that. I think we need to respect that this is a growth stage in middle school students and sometimes they just need to be with their peers."

Mrs. S--"I give pep talks to my kids because kids now a days I don't think they get too much of that from home."

Mr. H--"I cannot say enough good things about the Degrassi Jr. High video series. It deals with issues that need to be discussed so I feel that is very healthy. It's also very provocative. We try not to use has this happened in your life or mine, but we speak about it in the third person. From watching this we got into writing skits. We did one where the students pretended someone had started a horrible rumor about their best friend. It started outside the classroom with yelling and it came to a pushing match. So I turned to the advisement class and said 'Hey guys, what should I do? Give me some solutions.' The kids really bought into it. They thought this was really happening. I had each group stand up and tell what they had discussed and what would really happen with each suggested solution. It was so well liked that we did it for other a/a groups and I had to grab the teachers and tell them what was happening cause it was so real. This experience really opened up our a/a group."

Mrs. J--"To establish a freedom type deal, we put a little basket on my desk and I call it my little freedom basket and I say 'If you had the opportunity to run this school and you could be the principal for the day or week, what would you allow the students to do?' They are much tougher than we are in the rules. Then we go over which of their rules they have broken in the last two weeks."

Mr. H--"One day a week I take the kids out and play basketball or volleyball or they go out and romp if they want to. I'm handicapped so I can't run and jump but I am right out there with them. Kids have got to be able to move around. That's not something that I am necessarily crazy about, but it works."

Mr. H--"We have a birthday party each month for the kids who have a birthday. The kids bring in the pepsi and stuff, and I bring some, and we set up a nice little table and it's beautiful, great."

Mrs M--"I like to do new things that will keep them interested Involved make them feel good about themselves and feel successful "

Mrs J --"I decided to let the students have my advisement handbook and then I give them each a month and they choose a section that they would like to see or hear about Then they go through the handbook and they actually find lessons that they are interested in What we do on Tuesdays is that we do those lessons and the students present the lesson to the class with my help The students are much more interested when I let them do everything And also the students who are doing the lesson see themselves in a new role and they get to see that, 'Yes I can do something important and in this class I count as a person' Students are participants all day long here students are the leaders."

Mr D--"Kids make a list of topics to discuss or I get ideas from the teen section of the paper or sports Book activities don't work Kids want to discuss things "

Mrs M and D--"Kids like foolish and crazy things We are having a basketball tournament in our room with paper wads It is very well controlled and they are taking care of it They are setting up the matches and what not They like to talk about problems of the world and every now and then they talk about things bothering them "

Mr S --"We have lots of discussions and things that put people in a positive mind Things like writing something on a piece of paper on everyone's back Getting in a circle and letting people fall back and catch you anything to get them to trust each other Generally the first thing I do in advisement is ask if there is something they want to discuss and if something comes up that is pressing then we throw away whatever the activity was for that time and the group will discuss that one thing for however long that lasts The counselors may not like to hear that sometimes I throw out whatever they had planned but that's the way it goes "

Mrs C--"Some of the best activities are physicalizations of what trust is all about (like the trust circle) I feel like the medium is the message Rather than do the lesson on cooperation I'd rather do a game that requires cooperation And then you talk about it "

Mrs C--' We do a student of the week that has been so successful On Mondays I drew a name out of the hat I take pictures of all the kids at the beginning of the year Then the whole class writes in 20 words or more what we like about that person We post the picture on the bulletin board and I read all the things aloud I read every single word and they all listen and they are all polite and we've got the "victim" sitting right there too We post them too The students are real careful to be specific in their comments We worked alot and that's part of advisor/advisee not to be general and so the lesson overlaps with

the activity All that weak that person does everything like errands and stuff teacher's pet for a week So for one week they get lots of attention from all of us And then the rest of the time we to try to be nice to them On Friday we take down all the bulletin board stuff and address an envelope to their mom and dad and we mail them from the school We want to be sure it gets there so we mail it."

Mr C--"I do something called good news bad news everyday in advisement We just sit around See discussion is the key if you give them things to do than it's just like another class but if it's discussion, give and take then it will work So you have to force them to make discussions at the beginning of the year So I start off with good news and bad news and there's always somebody in the class very willing to tell you everything about themselves like "The good news is grandma is coming to stay bad news is I have to sleep on the couch And then the kids start getting bored with the same kid babbling on and on all the time and you say 'Wow why do we always listen to the same person talking all the time? Why don't you come up with some good news, bad news yourself?' and they do And I say Right after good news bad news we are going do this paper It becomes the class challenge to keep a conversation going so that they don't have to do the handout I've given out maybe two handouts all year one on careers and one on decision making I also have a Dear Abby activity I ask them all to write out a Dear Abby question they might want to ask and then draw one out every once in a while I have the Kid's Book of Questions, a book of puns a book of jokes, and a book of fifty paper and pencil activities."

Mrs R --"Monday is our social day and that's when everyone has a chance to get up and they tell what they did over the weekend Tuesday is any activity I plan That's my day It could be pencil and paper or it can be where they make something Wednesday is student activity day One of the other teachers takes some out to play football or they can stay in and play cards or do homework or play balloon volleyball Thursday is academic drill day and Friday is silent reading day which I've made enrichment day and they can do anything as long as it's quiet The kids and I plan a lot together I haven't used my Advisement Book for two years It's collecting dust on my shelf."

Advisee Participation

These effective advisors had suggestions about how to involve students in advisement activities The suggestions ranged from trying to include everyone by using different activities and groupings not forcing participation but simply letting all students know that the advisor cared

Mrs W --"Well all kids need to feel that someone cares about them and that they are important and that their opinions and views about things are important and matter "

Mrs B- "I have a new kid in advisement and I just can't seem to break through But when I talk to him he understands me he just says "I don t want to relate" But that is ok If he can at least verbalize that he doesn't want to relate he just wants to sit there Who am I to force a kid? He gets forced all day long to write to participate and do all this stuff Advisement is not for forcing I think I see him smiling more at me in the hallway though "

Mrs S -"If I see a student who is very "clamish" I might put them on the spot I will tell them Now listen I don't like to put people on the spot but some of you I think you've got some good things inside of you and you might be kinda shy to bring it out or to express it So I am gonna call on you now cause it's about time you come on out and express yourself " I might walk to the child and touch the child and say that to set up some confidence there "

Mr S- "You get everyone to participate by making sure you don't leave anyone of them out of the discussion Always bring them in, there are some days they are not going to want to but you still try and bring them in Making sure that there is nobody I won t touch in the room or talk to or sit next to rather than standing up and being a leader you go and sit by them You put them in small groups and then you take time to work with everyone of the kids "

Mr C- "Within my class there are some k ds that love to be in the conversation and other kids that love to listen to the conversation So you don t force the ones who don t want to get involved you let them listen I have two kids who like to work on the computer more than anything else and they occasionally pop in to the discussion The difference styles of children are so much more apparent in advisor/advisee than in the regular classroom "

Discipline In Advisement

Discipline does not seem to be a problem for effective advisors The relationship that is developed between advisor and advisees seems to create a mutual respect openness and relaxed atmosphere that makes classroom control easier even in a class where no grades are given How advisors go about building a relationship with their advisees is discussed at the beginning of the teacher interview findings section

Mrs D -"Once the initial adjustment period is over, discipline is never gonna be a problem I recognize them I don't allow them to degrade themselves and I don't allow them to degrade others, just to be very cool I try to let each one know they are individuals "

Mr H--"I have a reward system II for two days they become involved in a discussion and contribute to it so that they are not their normal irritating selves for that day they can earn from 5 to 10 dollars which are put in a savings book Then we have a bazaar where they can actually buy little radios and things It s a matter of how hard they want to work toward earning dollars "

Mrs S--"I think I can get them to do almost anything I want them to do and still I can play with them I always bring things out I always say let me be able to smile at you and be friendly to you and you still have respect from them And they learn that they have to separate in the classroom from out the door There you can kid with me or play with me or say something funny go ahead but when you come in we are serious and that s the way it is "

Mrs R -"We have a very informal unstructured relationship They have rules that they have to follow as far as you don't crack on other people and you don t stand up and fly off desks But most of the time it s very informal and it s very open and flexible In my classroom my main concern is that they learn math and in advisor/advisee my main concern is that they're gonna start their day off good They are gonna start off the day with everything they need They are gonna start the day off laughing in my room and hope it carries over for the rest of the day "

Mr D--"If I have a child for advisement whatever kind of discipline problem they are for other teachers, I never, never have a problem with them in the classroom mainly because of the respect that's built, the bond In fact they will go out of their way to fulfill what they have to do in social studies That's why I really feel strongly about getting these kids on my team I think you know them better too if you have them for academics and advisory "

Reaching Academic Potential

Since student s reaching their academic potential is a major goal of advisement and of schooling in general, it is important to find out what effective advisors do to help students academically Advisors tended to look at more than academics when they tried to help a student and this could be a major difference between the teacher and advisor role Advisors tried to keep up with

their academic progress to encourage students write positive notes on report cards explain when a student did not understand his classwork and talk to other teachers on the advisee s behalf

Mrs W-"With all the kids at middle school our goal is to make them as successful as possible There are many kids particularly at this age level that can't achieve academic success because there are so many other barriers I think that is where we can help with advisement. We are looking at the whole person not just a student from an academic class. That is the view we need to take of students so we get to know them as much as we can about them and the problems that they may be grappling with and the way they interact with other students that may be helping them to be successful in the classroom or may be a hinderance to them We help them address those problems if they have problems or to build on the successful relationships '

Mr H-"I try to talk to the advisees' other teachers and see how I can help "

Mr B- "On Thursdays and Fridays we have time for study hall and I give them help and I try to encourage them We talk about grades in a/a and most of them will honestly admit that they really don't give it everything they've got We talk about academics and what they can do to do better "

Mrs M and D- "I found that the thing that works best with my kids is if I pair them and say All right here's the person who is really good in math and if you're stuck on a math problem go and see this person Don't hesitate to ask them for help because they understand what s going on and they like to help you ' They have a couple days a week when they can go and ask for help from the peer tutors If the tutors don t know the answer and I don t know the answer then I can get a source that does know "

Mrs C- "I look at every report card and I will say Oh this grade went up that s really good I m really glad to see this happened But what happened here? There is extra help you know tutoring available ! And I remind them of the things to do in order to help out. Maybe I would say Ok I want to see you first thing in the morning to show me your assignment sheet and your completed homework ' Those kinds of things "

Mr D--"Basically the way I go about it is to tell them I want you to do well Don t let us down That kind of attitude Encouragement more than anything else I make sure I write little things on their report cards positive stuff If they are getting F s we sit down and I want them to tell me why they're getting F

making sure they understand why and take responsibility for it not me pointing a finger and saying "You got an F don't do that again."

Mrs C--"I like to get them off to a really good positive start for the day feeling good about themselves and kinda having a happy experience I think that sets the tone for the rest of the day."

Advisee Problems

Advisors as the name implies are also supposed to help students when a problem arises Most effective advisors provide a sympathetic ear and try to help the student cope with the problem

Mr H--"I have a chair that I keep near my desk and while we are watching Degrassi Jr High if a kid has a problem he wants to talk to me about he can come here while the program is on I am not the one that is necessarily going to provide a cure but I have a sympathetic ear I will listen and not be judgmental and I am going to seek counsel for the student if I can't help

Mrs C--"If an advisee is in trouble and they call me in on it I get involved But I do think that the kids in my homeroom feel like if they're down and out and they need somebody to say something nice about them they can count on me for that I feel like I am in their corner I may not agree with what they've done I can't get them out of their consequences but I think that they probably feel that if push comes to shove I'm gonna be there for them."

Parent Contacts

There did not seem to be too much contact between parents and advisors although effective advisors had made some efforts Lack of funding for special events seemed to inhibit more regular parent advisor contacts In the smaller communities and when advisors own children were of middle school age there were more informal parent contacts through church and community activities.

Mr H--"We call the parents once a year at least and say this is what we are going to do this year with your child if they have any questions or problems

please feel free to call me and you introduce yourself You get to meet them as they come in for open house and they know who to call "

Mr B--"It would be nice to get together for a cookout with the parents of the advisement group but funding and things like that make it difficult."

Mrs C- "I try to hold a social before the open house We had ice cream sundees this year I sent them all an invitation and asked them to come in so we would have a little extra time At the end of the year when we give out awards I invite all the parents to that "

Advisement Organization

Effective advisors also had some suggestions for the organization and structure of advisement Some of them liked having students in academic class and advisement others did not. Some advisors thought it was best to have the sames advisees for all three years of middle school but most did not. Some thought that the advisement time was too short or the groups were too large But all of the advisors thought advisement wes an important part of the middle schoolers' day and the middle school teachers' day also

Mrs W--"I feel that we've hit upon here a way that works extremely well That is meeting with no more than 10 to 12 students for one whole period once a week As far as organization this is good "

Mrs J--"The advisory program is great but I feel the practice is not what the students really need If we are to be advisors number one the groups should be kept at a reasonable size and for that matter the type of advisement that kids need is not necessarily group type advisement but individual types of advisement. Right now advisement is like another type of classwork for students The privacy is just not there so the conversation is kept at the superfical level Many of the kids will tell you what they think you want them to say as opposed to what they really feel and then they turn around and carry on a conversation with their friends where they feel comfortable Also I don't think you can make advisors of people who don't want to be advisors and I don't think all teachers should be advisors It is when things are mandated that they take a different perspective I'd much rather have attained people who want to and are willing to do advisement"

Mrs B- "Seventh graders are very comfortable with kicking back sitting up and talking With sixth graders it was all nonsense seventh graders are so neat in their conversation and their feeling that they are trying out It's going to be interesting to see them as 8th graders next year "

Mrs M and D--"I think it is really unfair for kids who get an advisor who is not truly an advisor and then they have to suffer for a year or two or three When they don't get anything out of it That s not fair "

Mrs C -"I think I am more effective with some students than I am with others I think there are others that really like what we do and other kids that think it's babyish They are just not interested or I just don t reach them Well that s the beauty of having three different advisors I used to think it would be nice to follow the same class all the way through but I think the kids like different styles and it's good for the kids to have different people each year because I can t I don t reach every kid like I d like to "

Mrs C--"I like to know my advisees better and I feel like its so good when I can have them in homeroom and then again in class because I can understand them better I know them better as a person I know better how to handle them and get the most out of them academically as well "

Mr C-' I like the kids and they like me That comes from not having to judge them academically I have only three of my kids in my academic classes the other 18 I don t see ever other than in homeroom and I think it should be arranged so that I didn t have any of my advisees in academic classes My advisement group gives themselves a name and a symbol and when we pass in the halls we make our symbol '

Advisory Groups

Advisors seem to be very pleased with the heteroganeous mix of their advisement groups They might like to have a few students who are leaders curious talkative and open but for the most part they were happy with whatever mix of advisees came their way

Mrs W--"I think you have to have a mixed group I don t think you get much play off of one another in discussions unless you do If you ve got all bright kids or all from families where they don't seem to be experiencing any problems you really wind up with a sorta dull lifeless discussion So I think kids with varying abilities and backgrounds make a nice mix I think those are probably the best groups "

Mrs S- "I'd have those kids that are really talkative I tell them that I love talking to children cause I can learn a lot from them I love to talk too"

Mr D--"My ideal group would be vocal well behaved, academically oriented and would interact when asked to do so "

Mr S--"Open honest curious students so anything and everything is open for discussion would be nice Of course they don't all have to agree but be open honest and curious enough that everything will come out They are at an age when so many things are mysterious "

Mr C--"You need some leaders some good energetic student leaders to keep the ball rolling cause then it s more the students program and less mine "

Mrs R--"I want kids who are willing to take chances to do some things they might not know how to do They are gonna try I don t want kids who are gonna sit there and say I hate this or I don t want to do that just try it "

Mrs C -"I'd choose a group close to the one I have now They are respectful of the advisement period and they know it's a time to share and they like that idea I can t think of anything else that would make it better "

Administrator and Counselor Assistance

Effective advisors described several ways that they thought the administrators and counselors of the middle schools could help them do their best job of advising Most of the comments centered around administrators becoming more actively and directly involved with advisement Counselors could be most helpful by being responsive to advisor referrals of students and by providing ideas for advisement

Mrs W--"I think that it is very important in a counselor to be both perceptive and responsive to student and teacher advisement needs. She can also make a skeleton of curriculum for advisement available to teachers "

Mrs J--"We have a good counselor here and she has groups for the kids who have the same kinds of issues that need attention "

Mrs C--"We get a calendar and everyday there s a specific kind of activity or discussion that is being done and they do visits to the classrooms to see how

we are doing I think the counselors do a wonderful job I think it would be neat to see administrators doing advisement because that would give them a whole other side of the administrative job And the kids would get to see the administrators in a different light. It could change the kinds of relationships that work all around "

Mrs W- "Our principal is a very trusting individual He trusts this faculty with a great deal of responsibility and to the extent of doing less then the best job would be a betrayal of him That's hard to put into words but we really feel empowered We have a lot of power in what we do here and a lot of choice too and that makes us work all the harder "

Mrs D--"I guess providing support to do the things that belong in a child oriented classroom is where principals can help most Be visible in the hallway and in the classroom not only for the child but for the teacher Let the children know that even the administrators care about them Smile at kids Don't nag them and holler all the time I hate hollering administrators "

Mr H--"I would like our principal to come in and get to know the students on a one-on-one basis instead of just being an administrator and having to fuss at students Become part of what's going on in advisement not just wondering I'd enjoy some dialogue about advisement with someone who has observed in my classroom "

Mr B--"Administrators should just go in and sit down and have a jam session with the kids Say 'Ok what would you like to see here at this school What are some problems you would like to address? It's a question of making time "

Mrs M and D--"Administrators could help in setting up a scenario that would work best for reluctant advisors and would not harm children Like a teacher who has to take an advisement group could be given kids in his subject area that need extra help and he could assist them with their academic needs"

Mr S--"Allow the time for kids to discuss what they want to discuss more freedom I know there are a lot of things that are mandated to be done and they do that during advisement I understand but advisement is not really free time for administrative tasks it is free time for students special needs."

Mrs C--"I think it's absolutely crucial priority number one..every single day during advisement for administrators to be walking around and nosing into the activities That's the way you make sure it happens I think it's nice for them to come into the room drop in and participate if they want or if they are invited Just their presence makes sure it will happen I think guidance counselors can

be a good help to advisors by showing you ways to deal with kids that don't really fit into your advisement group as well as you'd like them to."

Mr. D--"I think administrators and counselors need to become more aware of what advisement is. There are many, many administrators who have no concept of what the middle school truly is. They are not really committed to it, you know how can you really push an advisement program if you're not really committed to a middle school. I think the guidance counselors should probably oversee the program in each grade level, which they should do by suggesting activities, maybe going into the classrooms that have been identified as advisors that aren't really doing the program. And the principal and assistant principal need to be seen in the advisement classroom. I think that is very important, especially since they are the ones that are the demons always dealing with discipline problems. They need to see the other side of all that. Maybe they could share an advisement group with the guidance counselor. I know they are busy people but I think this would bring them back to reality a little bit."

Mrs. R--"Anytime administrators and counselors are at a meeting or another school or they're out shopping and they see an idea in a book store or whatever, they need to bring it back and put a copy some place. Counselors could arrange speakers for three or four classes, like bring in someone from outside."

Advice for Advisors from Effective Advisors

Effective advisors advise other teacher-advisors to get to know their advisees, to care about them, listen to them, and give them a part in the decisions about advisement class. Additionally, teacher advisors should relax and have fun with their advisees. They should have a positive attitude and be willing to try new things. They should enjoy and celebrate the uniqueness of each of their advisees. And the interviewed advisors also recommended that they keep on trying to make advisement work for themselves and for their students.

Mrs. J--"You have to care and to know exactly what these kids have on their minds, which is hard during these times. Let the kids tell you the problems and drop those book ditties and worksheets. Don't make it look like work."

Mrs B--"I tell teachers to let the kids have a part in the advisement activities Let them have some ownership Kids are now participating on the advisement committee and are making up some of the activities Advisors need to be open to trying some of the kids' stuff and the advisees need to be willing to assume some of the responsiblity for making advisement work "

Mr K--"Don't try to make it a mandatory type of program for your students try to make it more of a free flying student oriented teacher directed time with less on the teacher-directed and more on the student "

Mrs. H--"The most important thing is to look at your team of students as individuals You can really use advisement to your advantage because it can really help to develop cohesiveness and bring the kids together in a way that makes the team feel like a family We try to look at the needs of the team and the needs of the kids on the team and we work towards those needs There are lots of great activities and wonderful things to try out with the kids but you need to keep the kids as the focus."

Mrs. D--"My advice is to relax, to go with the flow Let the kids know who you are take time to find out who they are Enjoy them Be yourself with the kids."

Mr H--"Encourage teachers to go ahead and be an adult rather than a teacher for these 30 minutes Learn things about the kids to let them know that you are honoring them Celebrate their strengths praise them make them feel good about themselves And understand that with some it's a slow process to turn them around "

Mrs M--"If you are happy about advisement and you view it as an important time of the day then kids will too "

Mrs M--"I think you should get all kids involved in activities I think advisors just need to be enthusiastic about advisement and not look at it as another duty "

Mrs M and D--"Don't feel like you are locked into following exactly what the book says you have to do If you find something that works with your group then continue to do it Experiment with new things "

Mr S--"Be willing to listen even if you don't agree with them Be willing to let them speak their ideas Carry their load sometimes But basically just be honest and open If there are stress you can't handle send them to someone who can handle them "

Mrs C--"Make your advisor/advisee period fun for you If you enjoy it they will enjoy it I think that the thing is to play to your own strengths If you are

good at something make that the heart of your advisor/advisee program Don t try to copy someone else "

Mr C--"Because you are an English teacher and a lesson flopped you don t stop teaching English It s the same thing with advisement You just have to keep doing it and doing it and learning a little something until you get better at it When you get your first class where it works Then you realize that you can form a bond with these students that you can t form as a classroom teacher You realize that that bond is important to you Then that s it You re hooked."

Mr D--"Always listen, have an open ear Listen to the kids as they are coming into the classroom Find out what their interests are just by listening to them Then start developing activities in advisement that are nurtured around their kinds of interests Flexibility is another game If the kids come into the room talking about a fight whether it's a professional fight or a fight in the hallway throw out your plans and go with them "

Mrs R--"We ve gotten away from letting students see us as human beings because we don t have the neighborhood school where we do see them in the grocery store or the post office You ve got to get close to these kids You've got kids that can see right through you They know that when you're saying 'Yes I am listening' while you are doing something else they know that you re lying And they hold that against you That hold grudges real good You ve got to let these children see that even as a teacher you have feelings you have characteristics you have likes and dislikes pet peeves Let your defenses down a little bit in advisory Let the kids see that you have a human side that you can laugh and your face won t crack I treat the kids like part of the family not like my own children but maybe like you'd treat your brothers and s sters Try to be more positive and be more personable and to actually listen and try If you want these kids to learn then you have got to try to help them want to learn You ve got to understand that they are only children Kids get bigger each year I have a kid in my class that gets on my nerves and he s twice as big as I am but he s only eleven years old And it's hard when he acts eleven because you expect him to act like I do because he is adult size You can't stop trying You've got to constantly search for some way to reach your group and once you find that click that is all it takes It may take you six weeks and you may have to do a lot of searching to find it but every advisement group has something that they are all willing to do Once you get them all willing to do this one thing then you can slide the other things in you want to do They may grumble but they are gonna do it cause they know eventually they are going to get to go back and do what they had fun doing Or do all fun stuff for six weeks and then start little by little to do the other advisement stuff It can be done if you're willing to take the time Heaven forbid you may have to come in a little early you may have to stay with a kid after school or you may have to use your lunch time That s hard for some people because their contracts say

they only have to teach this many minutes and they're not gonna do anything past that."

Effective Advisors

Many of the suggestions that the effective advisors gave as advice to other advisors are the things that they think make teachers effective as advisors. Being open, honest, fair, flexible, and enthusiastic are important. Listening, sharing, caring, communicating, understanding, respecting, and teaching are essential.

Mrs. W-"Advisors need to understand and know the kids. When I say understand them I mean the types of reasoning processes that they are really capable of doing. It is real important to understand kids from a developmental standpoint, but then again you have to understand individual kids and their backgrounds too. And advisors have to be effective communicators and not everyone is."

Mrs. D- "I respect a kid when he walks in. A child is a person who has something to offer. It's a very natural approach for me because I like teaching. So it's very natural for me to go up and shake someone's hand or smile or welcome them. I am a people person. I set out expectations and I keep them. I say to students in all my classes, 'You treat me with respect and in turn I will treat you with respect'. I give them a solid foundation of what I expect and I allow them to tell me what they expect and we talk about it. I believe there is a time and place for paper activities and there's a time and place where that needs to be abandoned."

Mr. B-"First of all I think advisor is a very important role because we are role models for these kids. It's important just being honest and fair with kids because they respect that."

Mr. S-"You have to be open and honest with them. Answer those questions that you can answer, listen to them, try to get them to see each others' points of view. That's difficult to do sometimes. If someone attacks someone else's idea you have to try to keep it focused on the idea not the person. It's like any relationship, you have to build confidence, and if you work at it then it will work."

Mrs. C-"Advisors need to be good listeners. The kids will bring up subjects they want to talk about and the advisor needs to be flexible and open to that. Advisors need to be risk takers because it means sharing a part of

yourself So the issue becomes how do I do that in advisement and not in my math class You can do it because you are showing that in the privacy of the advisement class things are different It's a good thing for everyone that's involved It doesn't change what happens outside that room. advisement changes what happens during that advisory period."

Mrs C--"I think that any time you can give any kid in your advisor/advisee 30 seconds of uninterrupted time to look at them and talk to them. I think that is the best They also respond to notes like little happy grams and they like little prizes But I think above all they want your attention and I think that's hard to give."

Mr D--"Often I'll give the kids a piece of paper and ask them to work with a buddy on it or something because I want to hear them talk I want to hear what they are saying to their friends as I mill around the classroom A new advisor has to understand that it's all right for kids to talk it's all right for a kid to get up and go across the room and maybe ask another friend or me something I just don't think a good advisor is going to line them up in seven rows and pass out a piece of paper and do paper and pencil all period It's not gonna work That's not what advisement is intended to do I think advisors should be flexible go easy have a good time and fun with each other, get excited about things get angry the whole bit."

Mrs J--"It's important to just like the kids not necessarily because they are great kids or anything but for just the little things they do and say You have to have a personality that is friendly, open and that kids can relate to It can't be phony they won't relate to it."

Mrs R--"I am one of those people that respects authority and when it was voted by majority to do advisement and the principal said here's what we do and here's a book to help you do it That's my personality If this is part of my job to do advisement for 20 minutes I'll do the best 20 minute advisement you want done I think the fear was a big part of not knowing this new role At first I got the impression that these kids came to you and if they didn't have pencil and paper you gave them pencil and paper You got them ready and gave them a pat on the back and started them in on their day We do that but along with giving them the paper and pencil I teach them that it's their responsibility to bring it every day Yes I have to pat them on the back sometimes because mom and dad are at work and there is no one there that says 'Have a good day' when they leave I think that's the whole thing A lot of teachers talk about child abuse and the laws and can't do this to kids don't hug kids you don't touch kids you can't do anything you'd be sued Granted you might be sued but sometimes you have to say 'Sorry it I'm gonna be sued but this kid needs a hug today."

Importance of Advisement

Perhaps one of the main reasons that the teachers interviewed are so effective as advisors is because they see an importance to doing advisement both for the advisees and for the advisors. Their comments speak eloquently to this.

Mr. B--These kids are exploring every avenue of life and if nobody's there to kinda channel that, there is no telling what direction they are gonna go off to cause I know that some of them don't get it at home. I think advisement is a great program. I know the teachers have got to put forth a lot of effort to make it work. And we are all human, some are better advisors than others. But it is really making an effort for the kids. That's what this business is all about.

Mrs. C--"I find that it is extremely important that the one thing kids walk out of school without is real survival skills, the kinds of things that allow them to be Ok in life. Not science and social studies but rather how do I deal with relationships, how do I deal with myself, and how do I cope with life. I can't think of anything that better assists them to be prepared for that than advisement."

Mr. D --"When I first got into teaching I was always so busy trying to get social studies down their throats. But the first year in advisement was so invigorating because you find out, 'Wow, no wonder they don't like social studies much because they have so many problems and they have so much love to give too. They need at least one human being adult that they can feel good about and I think advisement does that. School should be more than coming in and doing social studies now and doing some reading and going home. It's gotta be more. Advisement lets me know day after day why I'm here. It's because of the kids. Two girls came to me to talk about that the mother had given one of the girls birth control for her thirteenth birthday. Now her talking to me that comes out of the trust that is built in advisement and we talked and she'll remember what was said for a long, long, long, long time, maybe the rest of her life. If I didn't have advisement it never would have happened. That is something we need to remember, and concentrate on that part, and stop worrying about I'm not a guidance counselor I don't get paid for that."

Mrs. R--"They learned cooperation in advisement. They've learned how to get along. They've learned that sometimes when somebody says something about you, you've got to turn and don't say anything and I even see them sticking up for each other in the hall. They may not like the kid in advisement and they can pick on him, but other people can't you know. I love my advisement and I love what advisement stands for."

Advisee and Advisor Interview Agreement

Students and advisors interviewed were in strong agreement over what makes a teacher an effective advisor for middle school students. Each group delineated 35 characteristics that were essential for effective advisors. There was agreement in student and advisor characteristics in at least 27 of these categories. Most of the 8 characteristics that were not common to both groups were at least mentioned by the other group, but the importance was not emphasized by that group.

Personal characteristics which both students and advisors determined to be important in an effective teacher-advisor were: caring, respect, enthusiasm, humor, honesty, cheerful, and a positive attitude.

Advisor behaviors which both students and advisors described as important in effective advisors were: listening, trying, treating everyone fairly, communicating, being interested in students, available to students, having confidence and trust in students, being flexible, helpful, sharing self, being a good role model, and not yelling.

Organization of the advisement class provided a third category of effective advisor skills according to the students and teachers interviewed. These skills were: asking student opinions, making advisory activities fun, letting students plan some activities, including all students and the advisor in participation, being creative with the activities suggested in the advisement handbook, and creating a relaxed atmosphere in advisement for students and teacher.

Advisor and Advisee Interview Differences

Advisors delineated the following characteristics and behaviors as important to effective advisement. They may have been mentioned by the students, but these were not stressed as important in the student interviews. Effective advisors thought it was very important to recognize and accept individual differences in students. They felt it was important to teach lessons in affective skills. Teachers felt that it was important not to force all students to participate. Teachers expressed a desire to get to know each student individually and to have an empathetic relationship with each student. Teachers also felt that one of their advisor roles was to be in the students' corner and intercede when it was needed. The advisors also wanted to create a "safe space" in advisement that would include an open sharing of ideas and selves.

Students felt that it was extremely important for advisors to notice when they were feeling down and they wanted the advisor to provide help for the problem. Students wanted their advisors to smile and be more like a friend than an advisor. Students also wanted the advisory topics to be related to what was most relevant for them and they did not want advisors to lecture to them.

Survey and Interview Agreement

Findings from the survey and interview data corroborated each other. In both forms students were more interested in the teacher advisors' interpersonal skills than they were in the teachers' academic credentials. Characteristics and skills that students selected on the survey and by using their own words during

the interviews produced similar conclusions Students want an advisor who cares, listens and tries to help Teacher and student findings were also very similar They will be discussed again in Chapter VI

The differences between various subgroups of students which were evident on the survey instrument results were not clarified through the interviewing process Interviewed students expressed similar views about teacher-advisors across all subgroups of students

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary and Conclusions

The purpose of this research was to study middle school teachers as advisors from student and teacher perspectives. The primary sources of data were surveys of 506 middle school students and 65 teacher-advisors and interviews with 123 students and 21 teachers identified by students as effective advisors. Data were tabulated and analyzed to develop a set of personal characteristics, advisor behaviors, and advisement organizational features that both students and teachers found to be effective for middle school advisement. This case study sought to answer five research questions. The following sections will provide a summary of the conclusions that have been reached pertaining to each research question.

How Do Middle School Students Describe an Effective Teacher Advisor?

When middle school students were asked what makes a teacher effective as an advisor, most students responded that an effective advisor is someone who is "nice." But just what does a "nice" advisor mean to middle schoolers? Survey and interview data give a description of an effective advisor from the students' point of view.

Most importantly a nice or effective advisor cares and is concerned about student is upset, finding time to talk to the student about problems listening and helping students think through some possible solutions to their concerns. When an advisor does these things students perceive the advisor to be more like a friend than a teacher A good advisor respects all students and their opinions and treats everyone fairly and equally by including everyone in advisement activities and trying to develop positive relationships with every student Effective advisors communicate that they like students by showing interest in students having confidence in them participating with them in advisement class sharing about self and having a positive attitude Students also want an advisor to be a good role model for students one that is enthusiastic humorous and honest

An effective advisor creates a relaxed atmosphere in advisement class by being relaxed flexible about advisement activities and providing things for students to make or do Students want to help decide on topics for discussion and to participate with the advisor in planning advisement activities that are fun This means that effective advisors need to be creative with activities drawn from the advisor/advisee handbook. The effective advisor is enthusiastic about advisement the activities and the advisees

An effective teacher advisor does not do several things According to students the effective advisor should not yell should not lecture students, and should not have favorites among the advisees

How Do Students' Perceptions of What Makes a Teacher an Effective Advisor Differ among Students of Different Gender, Race, Grade Level, Socioeconomic Status, and Academic Achievement?

There are differences in the perceptions of various groups of middle school students about what makes an advisor and advisement effective for them. These differences will be summarized and discussed by categories.

Gender differences

Males wanted an advisor that respected student opinions and someone who joked with them. Males seemed to think that it is especially important for an advisor to have a positive attitude; they wanted an advisor that was fun to be with, who had a sense of humor. Females tended to want a more personal, caring relationship with an advisor who was available to talk and was self-disclosing. There were not major differences between male and female students, but 80% of the females reported having had good advisors, compared to 71% of the males. Perhaps the fact that females were more satisfied with their advisors relates to their being more comfortable with the discussions of feelings and relationship topics in many advisement classes. Also, as middle school students begin to "try on" the many roles of adulthood, perhaps each sex is interested in having an advisor that portrays the types of behaviors the different students see as important for their adult identity. Females may be able to find role models in their advisors more readily than males because there are more female teachers.

Ethnic differences

Asian students wanted an advisement class with many different planned activities including birthday parties and a class where everyone felt safe and comfortable Asian students wanted an advisor who is flexible and encourages class discussions Asian students seemed to indicate a preference for group versus individual identity These students wanted class discussion of problems in a safe comfortable environment

Black students wanted an advisor who they can talk to privately has a positive attitude teaches lessons on advisement topics and student selected topics and self discloses Many black students reported that it usually took them one to two weeks to trust advisors enough to confide in them Only 61% of the black students reported having had a good advisor Why only 61% of black students had experienced a good advisor is puzzling Even after probing for this information during interview sessions with 35 black students at eight different schools no specific reasons could be identified as to why this is so Perhaps a majority of their teachers being white and middle class prevented some black students from identifying with their advisors as appropriate role models or from believing that they could understand their life situations and problems The importance of advisor self-disclosure for black students may represent an attempt on the students' part to learn more about their advisors so they could determine if the advisors could understand the black student The black students who were interviewed indicated that sex race and age of an advisor were not factors in their satisfaction with an advisor but it may be that

the students who were interviewed were more satisfied with advisement than the black students who were included in the survey

Hispanic students wanted an advisor they could trust with a secret that they found time to talk and that would support them in a parent teacher conference Self-disclosure also was important to Hispanic students That Hispanic students wanted an advisor who would support them during parent teacher conferences may relate to parental pressure for Hispanic students to do well in school

White students wanted a flexible advisor with a sense of humor who they could tell how they really feel They wanted an advisor who helps them with schoolwork and compliments them when they do well Perhaps white students were more satisfied with their advisors because they had more traditional expectations of the role of the advisor to help students with schoolwork and to compliment them when they do well White students agreed with teachers on the survey item (Appendix C Question 8) that students want an advisor who they can tell how they really feel

Students from the "other ethnic" backgrounds category (students from several foreign countries and some students with apparently racially mixed backgrounds who were unsure where they fit in the other racial categories) wanted an advisor who could be trusted with a secret and who noticed if a student was upset This group also preferred small group work in advisement and it would take them a semester before they would confide in an advisor Students from "other racial backgrounds" rated listening to students and

respecting student opinions as more important than a caring attitude Noticing when a student seemed upset was especially important to "other ethnic" students These indicators seem to point toward a desire for validation and acceptance from the advisor and from other students

Grade level differences

It was particularly important for eighth graders to have time with their peers in small groups They also wanted opportunities to suggest topics for discussion

Seventh graders wanted an advisor who they could tell how they really feel That finds time to talk to them and compliments students when they do well They also would like an opportunity for students and advisors to plan some advisement lessons together and to have things to make and do in advisement

For sixth graders it was important for an advisor to be caring and to treat everyone equally Only 69% of the sixth graders reported having had a good advisor while seventh graders reported 79% and eighth graders reported 81%

Eighth graders want time with their peers and to discuss topics that are relevant to them Seventh graders want more individual attention from their advisors and an opportunity to work together to plan advisement. Sixth graders are more interested in a caring and fair approach to advisement class These differences may not seem major but their subtleties could make or break success in a particular advisement class

Perhaps sixth graders report having had fewer effective advisors because so far they have experienced only one advisor whereas eighth graders usually have had three different advisors since sixth grade Eighth graders may have had at least one of three advisors that they felt connected with and thus judged that they had experienced an effective advisor

Socioeconomic differences

For free lunch students it is important to have an advisor with a positive attitude and who talks to students regularly Only 68% of the free lunch students reported having a good advisor Reduced-priced lunch students wanted an advisor who self-disclosed and had things to make and do in advisement. Regular priced lunch students wanted an advisor who they could tell how they really feel and that let students bring up topics for discussion

No major differences can be seen in these responses except that 68% of free lunch students reported having had a good advisor while reduced (76%) and regular priced (78%) lunch students reported higher percentages Almost one-half (59 of 123 students or 48%) of the students reporting free lunches were black students who also reported the lowest satisfaction with advisors Listening talking to students regularly and sometimes privately respect and fair treatment all were stressed as important advisor traits by black students and free lunch students

Academic achievement

Respecting students opinions asking how students feel having a sense of humor and planning many advisement activities that could be done in small

groups were particularly important for lower achieving students. They also wanted an advisor they could joke with and trust with a secret. Many would confide in an advisor in one or two weeks, and 63% of low achieving students reported having a good advisor.

High achieving students wanted a flexible, caring, positive advisor with whom they could talk. Average ability students wanted an advisor who revealed information about self, had a positive attitude, and talked to students privately.

Although all levels of mathematics students tended to trust an advisor in one to two months, the same percentage of low achieving mathematics students (33%) would never trust an advisor enough to confide. Only 63% of lower achieving students reported having a good advisor, compared to 75% of average and 76% of high mathematics students. Sixty one percent of the low mathematics students were males, 46% were sixth graders, and 50% were white, 27% black, and 15% Hispanic. These students indicated a need for respect, humor, trust, and small group activities. These choices seem to indicate a desire to be accepted and to belong. They often were disappointed (30% to 35%) in experiencing an advisor that they thought was effective.

How Do Middle School Teachers Describe Effective Teacher Advisors?

The survey of 85 middle school teachers and interviews with 21 effective teacher-advisors showed that effective advisors are caring and concerned about students. Effective advisors show respect for all students and their opinions, and they help students think through ways to handle problems.

Teacher-advisors think that students believe a good advisor is someone they can tell how they really feel

Effective advisors are flexible encourage students to bring up topics for discussion and let students plan some advisement activities They also plan many different types of advisory activities that are fun and creative Effective advisors find time to talk to students and try to make everyone feel safe and comfortable in advisement They do not force all students to participate, but they keep trying to involve everyone

Good advisors according to teachers recognize and accept individual differences in students They try to get to know each student individually and to develop an empathic relationship They encourage the open sharing of ideas and selves They also are advocates for their advisees and intervene to help them when needed Effective advisors according to teachers have a positive attitude a sense of humor and enthusiasm for advisement They are interested in students have confidence in them and seek student opinions They also are relaxed and enjoy advisement often participating with the students in advisement activities

The characteristics that teachers use to describe effective middle school teacher-advisors seem to be characteristics that all teachers could master if they were motivated to do so Unfortunately not all teachers are geared toward establishing a warm nurturing relationship between teacher and students Perhaps this is because of the teachers personality or training attitude or some other cause These teachers may have to work more diligently to

become effective advisors for middle school students As student-teacher relationships in advisement improve teachers feelings of efficacy and success also improve which carries over to more successful teacher student interactions in academic classes as well

How Do Teachers' Descriptions of Effective Advisors Compare and Contrast with the Descriptions of Students?

Students and teachers agree on many of the characteristics of effective advisors Five areas of effective advising were found both on survey and interview data to be important to both advisors and advisees

1 The most important characteristic for effective advisors according to students and teachers on both survey and interview results was that advisors are caring and concerned

2 Respect for all students and their opinions also was considered critical for effective advisors

3 Listening to what students say and helping students to think about possible solutions to problems was stressed by both groups in both data collection methods

4 Finding time to talk and being available to talk about problems were ranked as necessary for effective advisors

5 Both teachers and students agreed that a good advisement class has activities that students believe are fun to do and that students have helped to plan or are topics students have suggested

There are definitely many areas of common understanding between students and teachers regarding effective middle school teacher advisors

During the interviewing sessions some additional topics were identified by the students and teachers. In the student interviews some things were mentioned that were not emphasized by the teacher-advisors who were interviewed. Students thought that an effective advisor should notice when a student is upset and should provide help with the problem. Students wanted a smiling advisor who was more like a friend than an advisor. Students also wanted to select advisement topics they thought were relevant to them. And they did not want advisors to lecture or yell at them.

On the other hand, interviews with effective teacher-advisors revealed that it was important for teacher advisors to recognize and accept individual student differences. Teacher advisors did not want to force all students to participate in advisement, although they did try to develop an empathic relationship with each student and to intervene as the student's advocate when needed. Effective teacher-advisors expressed the idea that it was important for them to teach affective skills to their advisees, as well as to create a safe place for the open sharing of ideas and selves in advisement.

The differences in students' and teachers' descriptions centered around students stressing friendship, help with schoolwork and problems, and relevance of advisement activities. Teachers stressed individual and class involvement in the learning of affective skills in a comfortable environment. Perhaps these differences can be narrowed to variations in student and teacher

perspectives The role of the teacher as the classroom organizer and the role of students as needing assistance to grow and develop to their fullest potentials provide some natural differences in perspectives

From the Students' and Teachers' Perspectives How Can the Effectiveness of Teacher Advisors Be Improved?

Overall, 75% of the students surveyed stated that they have had a good teacher-advisor during their middle school years These percentages ranged from a high of 100% among the 5 Asian students to a low of 61% among the 117 black students The percentages of students that reported having had good advisors also was low for lower socioeconomic status students (68%) lower achieving students (63%) and sixth graders (67%) Males (71%) also reported less satisfaction with their advisors when compared to females (80%) There appears to be a definite need to address the advisement concerns of these students In reviewing the survey data it was discovered that the only common characteristic that was ranked above 50% for all five of these subgroups was "treats everyone fairly and equally" In this study students expressed concern that all students should be involved in advisement activities and that teachers should keep trying to involve those students who are resistant They also stressed the need for all students and their opinions to be respected Students did not want to be yelled at, or lectured to or be singled out in front of their peers for either positive or negative communication Exploring more fully what these students consider to be fair and equal treatment

may be a starting point for advisors to open the lines of communication with these subgroups of middle school students

Fortunately students had several suggestions for advisors on how to improve advisor effectiveness Many of the students suggestions centered around the advisor relaxing or "chilling out " so that both the advisor and the advisees could enjoy advisement Students were also adamant that teachers who did not enjoy kids should find another job Students think that advisors should get involved with the students listen be patient and understanding with them and should keep on trying to reach all of the students Advisors should be a friend who has time for students and who students can trust Advisors should seek student opinions respect students and treat them fairly and equally Advisement activities should be fun relevant to students and advisors should participate in advisement activities with the students at least sometimes. Students and teachers should plan some advisement activities together Caring and communication seemed to be the two areas of vital concern to students in improving the effectiveness of advisors.

In order to improve the effectiveness of teacher advisors advisors themselves had suggestions for improving the organization of advisement the training of advisors administrative support and the attitudes of advisors Effective teacher-advisors thought that additional training for the advisor role could be offered for inservice teachers through workshops inservice education and sharing among advisors These advisors thought that the training should

be centered on communication skills characteristics of transescents and the sharing of successful practices

There was not a clear consensus among teacher advisors about the organization of advisement classes Some thought they should also have their advisees in academic classes but others did not agree Most thought that it was most effective to have advisees for only one year so that advisees had the opportunity to experience several advisor styles All of the advisors enjoyed having had a variety of students in their advisement groups

Some teachers had negative feelings about the responsibilities of being an advisor for middle school students They thought that this should be a parental role But all teacher advisors interviewed were enthusiastic about their relationships with their advisees and expressed an awareness of the importance of an advisement program for this age group of students

Administrative support for advisement would be appreciated by teacher advisors They wanted administrators to be visible during advisement to visit advisement classes or to have an advisement group of their own The advisors expressed that this would benefit administrators through a better rapport and understanding of the students and students would also have the opportunity to know their principals in a different way Counselors could assist advisors by providing advisement ideas and helping students who need professional guidance services

Last but still an important consideration for the improvement of teacher-advisors' effectiveness is the advisor's attitude toward advisement Effective

advisors and also students expressed the view that if teachers would relax and act like an adult friend during advisement it would improve advisement for both the teacher and the students Teachers need to care about students and let students know that they are interested in them Teacher advisors are not expected to be professional counselors but rather an adult teacher who is a concerned friend and who likes being with the students One teacher summed up what effective advising really is It is "making an effort for the kids That's what this business [teaching] is all about" (Mr B School I)

Educational Indicators

Several hundred studies have looked at effective teachers Few have focused specifically on the middle school teacher in an advisor role But the findings of this study are verified in the findings of several of the effective teacher studies

Johnston and Markle (1986) identified 18 characteristics of effective middle school teachers Three of which enthusiastic flexible and listens also were identified as important in the present study Other findings described by Johnston and Markle use terms that are similar to some considered in this study, for example demonstrates warmth probably means caring and concerned

Russell Purkey and Siegel s (1982) study of the artfully inviting teacher also has some similarities to the present study Creating a comfortable and safe environment was suggested by the teachers in this study as extremely important,and so was respecting individual differences and communicating

concern Reinviting students to succeed is one of the major goals of most advisement programs and most advisors and is the focus of Russell Purkey and Siegel s study

Davies (1970) comments that we cannot evaluate teachers ability to teach subject matter without evaluating their ability to interact with the students This is related directly to the types of things students and teachers said about effective advisors Personal characteristics of the advisor were found to be more important than the activities conducted during advisement classes The teachers who were interviewed also stressed as did Davies the importance of preparing the child for the world outside of school by attempting to meet each child's human needs and by encouraging the student to reach toward his educational potential

Wittmer and Myrick (1989) identified characteristics of facilitative teachers They combined the terms that college students used to describe good teachers into six categories of behavior (attentive genuine understanding respectful knowledgeable and communicative) Middle school students in the present study described many of these same characteristics They include respecting student opinions communicating caring and concern being interested and available to students and "chilling out" or being relaxed real and genuine Although students wanted advisors to be helpful in solving their problems they did not seem to be particularly concerned about the advisors' intellectual abilities

Many of the personal characteristics identified by middle school students as attributes of effective middle school teachers in Buckner and Bickel's (1991) study also were emphasized as important by the students in the present study Showing respect listening being friendly accepting everyone and communicating all are indicated as important attributes in the present study Buckner and Bickel s findings of demonstrating warmth and kindness no doubt are the same as the findings of caring and concern in this study

Sapona Bauer and Phillips (1989) described seven parts of a facilitative stance Four of the seven also are found in this study They are allowing students a share in decision making generating excitement about learning encouraging classroom dialogue and adjusting teacher support to students on an individual basis

Rogers (1951) describes the teacher role in student centered teaching (a) setting the mood or climate through teacher trust in the group which is communicated in many subtle ways (b) teacher elicits and clarifies the goals of the class members and accepts all students aims (c) students' desire to reach their own goals becomes the motivational force for learning (d) teacher organizes and makes resources available for students to use as they wish (e) teacher thinks of himself as a resource to be used in meaningful ways by the students (f) teacher accepts student intellectual emotional and attitudinal content (g) as the classroom climate becomes established the teacher changes to a participant role (h) teacher is alert to student feelings and communicates understanding (i) when group interactions become intense the

teacher remains neutral and gives acceptance to all (j) and the teacher is aware of his own limitations and the importance of genuineness in his attitudes The students and teachers in the present study also stressed the importance of a student centered advisement class Many of the aspects described by Rogers (1951) are evident in the present findings such as developing a climate of trust acceptance of all students student decisions about how to use advisement time and resources participation by the advisor communication of understanding and acceptance and most certainly the genuineness of the advisor Rogers (1951) stated that "individuals who have an orientation which stresses the significence and worth of each person can learn student centered teaching rather rapidly" (p 21) Similar statements were made by effective teacher advisors who believed that teachers with a student centered attitude would be more comfortable with their advisor role

The characteristics that Galbo (1989) describes as important in a significant adult for teenagers include trust communication understanding equitable treatment friendly interactions, and personally satisfying relationships All but the last characteristic also were identified by the teachers and students involved in this study Although a satisfying relationship does seem to result from an advisement class with an effective advisor, it was not stressed as a characteristic for effective advisors Galbo (1989) reported that gender preferences do not appear to be a factor in the development of significance relationships with adolescents Students in this study also

expressed that the sex, age, or race of the advisor were not factors in advisor effectiveness.

Putbrese (1989) concluded that "advisory programs have a significantly more positive impact upon the female population than the male" (p. 114). Eighty percent of the females surveyed reported having had a good advisor, while 71% of the males reported having had a good advisor. Because this is not a statistical study, the significance of these figures is not clear, but perhaps as Putbrese postulates, advisement programs are more geared to females.

Bergmann (1969) found no significant differences between female and male students' interview descriptions of the teacher from whom they learn best, although females cited teacher personal mannerisms more frequently than did males. The present study found the same thing. In Bergmann's study of at-risk adolescents, the three characteristics mentioned the most frequently also were found in the results of this study. They are sense of humor, help when needed, and understanding and concern about students.

Implications for Advisement Practices

Although the findings of this case study seem to have several of the same themes as previous studies of effective teachers, care should be taken in generalizing these findings to other middle school advisement settings. The students and teachers who participated in this study were all from model advisement schools in one state. All the students who participated were interested in the study and were responsible enough to obtain written parental permission to be interviewed. Teachers who were interviewed were identified

as one of several effective advisors at each school. The teachers interviewed were those who were cooperative and available on the scheduled day and time. Nevertheless, several implications for educational and advisement practice should be considered by educators.

Students were most interested in having an advisor who cared about them, was interested in them, that listened, and tried to help them. This is not a behaviorally objective description of an advisor. As Brophy and Good (1986) stated, such descriptions are "not easily translated into prescriptions for teaching practice" (p. 365). Middle school teachers should be aware of this and realize that there are many ways in which they can be effective, as well as comfortable, in a teacher advisor role. DiBiasio (1982) emphasized that advisement programs are only as "effective as the time, energy, attitude, and ability of the individual advisors" (p. 197). Middle school teacher-advisors are the critical variable in the success of advisement for their students, and there are numerous ways to be a successful advisor for middle schoolers. The important thing is that advisors form a positive relationship with their advisees in whatever ways work best for that advisor and the particular group of advisees.

Students want at least part ownership in the advisement program. They want relevant topics and opportunities to choose advisement activities that are fun and involve everyone, including the advisor. Teacher-advisors should be aware that students do not want full responsibility for the advisement sessions, but they are more likely to be cooperative with the advisor if they are consulted about how at least a part of the advisement class time is spent.

Students want an advisor who can relax and enjoy being with them Teachers need to forget some of the old adages about keeping professional distance and "not smiling until Christmas " at least during advisement class Professional judgement is important to maintain but it needs to be maintained in the context of being a real person and an adult friend for students Teachers need to be aware that students want and need teachers who are "less than mommies but more than distant and aloof dispensers of knowledge" (George 1989 p 15)

Students want an advisor who treats everyone fairly and keeps trying to reach the student that is resistant Students realize the necessity of everyone feeling like they belong and that someone is there for them even though students do not always act in ways that enhance this feeling among their peers The Carnegie Report states that "small group advisories enable teachers to provide guidance and actively monitor the academic and social progress of all students" (Hornbeck 1989 p 40) It is important not to let students "fall through the cracks" during this critical stage of development that has so great an impact on their futures Teachers need to keep trying with all students and especially with the difficult to reach students

The attitudes of middle school teachers who serve as advisors can be changed from negative to more positive by having the experience of a successful advisement class Klingele (1979) reports that a warm friendly understanding and a helpful teacher who genuinely likes students works best in the advisor role Team leaders counselors and administrators should

continue working to enhance the skills of every teacher advisor and should attempt to organize advisement so that teachers experience success in the advisor role

Teacher-advisors need and want the support and involvement of administrators in their advisement role Jenkins (1991) states that "the institution of an advisement program requires change and a change of such magnitude is not likely to occur without the support of the principal and the other administrators" (p 13) This seems to be a prime area for administrators to display instructional leadership and consultative supervisory skills Keefe (1986) states that "as the relationship between teacher and students becomes more supportive and mutually satisfying the school climate improves and both student and teacher performance is enhanced" (p 90) Advisement is a critical variable in the middle school for establishing such relationships and thus should be an administrative priority

Students and teacher advisors agree that advisement is an important part of the middle school day Students stated that it is important for them to have an adult that they know and can count on for help and encouragement They also expressed the need for a time in the school day to relax and share some of their stresses Teachers expressed that having advisement provided them with a sense of efficacy because of the special relationship that developed between themselves and their advisees As Maeroff (1990) has suggested, having an advisor provides each student with an adult in the school to turn to and advisement also provides a haven or "safe port in the storm of early

adolescence" (p 507) Maintaining and improving existing advisement programs and implementing advisory programs in middle schools that do not now have them should be a continuing priority of middle level educators and others concerned with the future of young people

There are differences in what individuals and groups of students find effective in advisement Teachers need to get to know the unique needs and preferences of their students and adjust their advising and the advisement program accordingly

Effective Advisor Synopsis

The findings and conclusions of this study may be summarized into the following insights for effective advising

1 There is no single specific correct formula for being an effective middle school teacher advisor for all teachers and all students.

2 Effective advisors care and are concerned about their advisees

3 Effective advisors have a positive attitude toward advisees and advisement

4 Effective teacher-advisors relax and enjoy advisement by being their genuine selves Students describe this as "chilling out"

5 Effective teacher-advisors let students know that they enjoy being with them

6 Effective teacher-advisors are interested in students and are available to them

7 Effective teacher-advisors listen to advisees help them think through possible solutions to their problems and seek help for the student when it is needed

8 Effective teacher-advisors are advocates for their advisees and intervene on their behalf in helpful ways with parents other teachers and administrators.

9 Effective advisors are trustworthy and respect student confidentiality

10 Effective advisors respect all students and their opinions

11 Effective advisors treat everyone fairly and equally and try to involve all students in advisement activities

12 Effective teacher-advisors know that there are differences in the needs and preferences among their advisees They learn about the uniqueness of their students and persist to assist all students to reach their greatest academic and social-emotional potentials

13 The environment in an effective teacher's advisement class is cheerful relaxed and stress-free for advisees and advisor

14 Advisees are given opportunities to make some decisions about how the advisement time is spent.

15 Effective advisors are creative and enthusiastic about advisement activities They want advisement to be fun for the advisor and advisees.

16 Effective advisors sometimes participate in advisement activities with students

17 Effective advisors know that students like working with small groups of peers and that they enjoy having activities that include things to make or do

18 Effective advisors do not yell lecture or single out students for positive or negative comments in front of their peers

19 Effective teacher-advisors encourage administrators and counselors to provide leadership and support for the advisement program and for advisors

20 Effective teacher advisors support each other's efforts and celebrate advisement successes

21 Effective teacher advisors are adult friends to their advisees

Recommendations for Future Research

Several suggestions for future research are indicated by the results of the present study

1 Further details need to be gathered about the differences in opinions of various groups of students in the middle school about advisement Perhaps a statistical study with a validated instrument could determine the significance of the differences in how males and females 6th 7th and 8th graders students of different races socioeconomic status and ability experience advisement and the middle school

2 Why the trust factor for confiding in an advisor is so difficult to develop for some low achieving students (33% reported that they would not confide in an advisor even after a whole year in advisement) needs to be studied further

3 A low percentage of black (51%) low socioeconomic (66%) low achieving (63%) and sixth grade (67%) students reported having had a good

teacher-advisor in their middle school years. Females report more satisfaction with advisement (80%) than males (71%). These findings need to be investigated further to find out why and what could be done to enhance the advisement program for these students.

4. Further study is warranted in the organizational areas of advisement to determine if various types of students would benefit more from long term relationships with one advisor (3 years) or the opportunity to experience three different advisors during their middle school years.

5. How teachers differ in their advisor skills based on their past and present circumstances, such as secondary or elementary education training, parents themselves, age, gender, race, or personality type should be studied.

6. The differences in teacher attitudes toward advisement, how they are developed, and how some of them could become more positive is needed so that students who attend advisement programs will spend their time in the most beneficial way.

7. Further study is needed into the types of training, both preservice and inservice, that are effective in developing teachers who are competent in all aspects of the middle school teachers' role, including advisor.

8. How the characteristics of effective advisors can be cultivated in teachers already on middle school staffs who are lacking affective skills or appropriate attitudes should be reviewed.

9 If the characteristics of an effective teacher-advisor are known how can principals and others responsible for h ring middle school teachers determine if these characteristics are present in people they consider hiring?

10 Further study is needed to determine the most productive roles for the middle school principal and the middle school counselor to enhance existing advisement programs and plan for the effective implementation of such programs in middle schools that do not have advisement programs

11 How important to the success of advisement are the components of advisement that are not directly related to building a relationship with students such as parent contacts, keeping discipline folders and community service projects?

12 How do schools where students keep the same advisor for three years compare to schools where students change advisors annually in terms of advisor and advisee satisfaction?

Much remains to be done before all the information that is needed about middle school advisement and advisors is complete

Effective Teacher Advisors for Middle School Students

The answer to the question of what makes a teacher an effective advisor for middle level students forms a kaleidoscope of characteristics and skills The ever changing interrelationship of these skills and characteristics is reflected in the constantly changing growth and development of the middle school students themselves The middle school teacher-advisor needs to be enthusiastic honest creative fun relaxed trusting self disclosing and a good role model

The effective middle school teacher advisor needs to maintain and communicate a positive attitude a sense of humor the willingness to work with all students, and do all of these things with a smile All of these skills are important to being successful as an advisor The focus on specific skills varies throughout the advisement process according to the needs of the advisees advisor and the advisement environment

Those skills and characteristics mentioned are encircled by a ring of necessary and extremely important teacher-advisor traits These are the traits that are necessary for developing an effective relationship between advisor and advisee These very important traits include caring trying listening and being interested available respectful involved helpful and flexible These traits must be communicated to advisees in a way that allows the students to understand their genuineness and thus be able to build a trusting relationship with the advisor

This description does not create a measurable behaviorally objective picture of an effective teacher-advisor that can be taught and mastered This picture of an effective teacher-advisor is a composite of many skills traits and characteristics that focus and refocus in varying ways to provide a channel through which middle school students can relate to their advisor Middle school teacher advisors need to focus their vision of the advisor role on these skills traits and characteristics in a way that forms a pattern of advising that is

comfortable to them and their particular group of advisees. A seventh grader named Jeff summed it up when he said, "I picture a lot of good qualities that make up a good advisor, especially caring."

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APPENDIX A

INTRODUCTION TO STUDENT SURVEY

Hi My name is Mrs Bushnell and I am from New Smyrna Beach Middle School near Daytona Beach I am a guidance counselor and now I have a job similar to _____ advisement coordinator at your school I am also a student at the University of Florida I am working on a dissertation report that is trying to find out what students and teachers think make a teacher an effective advisor for middle school students

I am asking for your help today in completing a survey about advisors Your name will not be on the survey You do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to answer although I would like you to try to answer as many questions as possible Two questions at the end of the survey will ask you to write an answer The other questions simply require coloring in the space on the answer sheet

It will probably take you one period to complete this survey If you do not care to participate in this survey you may leave and return to your classroom at this time

I will pass out the answer blanks surveys and pencils now Thank you for your help You may keep the pencil you use today

APPENDIX B

STUDENT SURVEY OF ADVISOR EFFECTIVENESS

DIRECTIONS

1 As you answer the following questions please try to picture in your mind an advisor that you have had that you thought was effective in reaching students like you Or picture the kind of advisor you wish you could have had In this survey your advisement teacher is called an advisor and students are sometimes called advisees.

2 The following questions should be answered according to your opinion There are no right or wrong answers. Please do not discuss your opinions with anyone else while completing this survey

3 Mark only ONE answer per question Mark the ONE answer that you think is the MOST important to you

4 Thank you so much for sharing your honest thoughts and opinions Hopefully this survey will help teachers learn more about what students want and need in a teacher-advisor

STUDENT INFORMATION

A Grade
1 6th
2 7th
3 8th

B. Gender
4 Male (boy)
5 Female (girl)

C Achievement
6 I am in an advanced math class
7 I am in an average math class
8 I am in a below level math class

D Race
9 Asian
10 Black
11 Hispanic
12 White
13 Other

E This is my ____ year in an advisor-advisee program
14 first year
15 second year
16 third year
17 fourth year

F Which of the following fits you?
18 free lunch
19 reduced priced lunch
20 regular priced lunch

EFFECTIVE ADVISOR INFORMATION

G A good advisor should be
21 young (less than 30 years old)
22 handsome or pretty
23 up-to-date in thinking and acting
24 caring and concerned about students

H A good advisor makes students feel special by
25 listening to what students say
26 respecting everyone's opinions
27 not lecturing students about behavior
28 noticing when students seem sad or upset

I A good advisor finds time to talk with advisees
29 privately
30 in small groups
31 in class discussions
32 outside of advisement class

J Good advisors talk with advisees individually
33 regularly (like once a month)
34 only when he/she notices an advisee has a problem

K. A good advisor remembers special events like a student's birthday by
35 singing "Happy Birthday" in advisement class
36 quietly giving me a card
37 having a birthday party
38 not mentioning my birthday so I won't be embarrassed

L. A good advisor plans for advisement class by
39 letting students do whatever they want during advisement
40 teacher having advisement lessons ready
41 letting students plan some advisement activities
42 students and advisor planning together for many advisement activities

M. A good advisor makes students feel important by
43 listening to them
44 respecting their opinions
45 talking to them outside of class
46 caring what happens to them in school

N. When a student has a problem, a good advisor
47 refers you to the counselor
48 tells you how to handle the problem
49 tells you how he/she handled a similar problem when he/she was your age
50 helps you think through some possible ways to handle the problem

O. A good advisor
51 treats everyone fairly and equally
52 never gives a discipline referral during advisement
53 expects all students to follow certain rules
54 makes sure everyone feels safe and comfortable in advisement

P. A good advisor's room
55 has students' art work or projects displayed
56 has lots of things for students to do
57 has assigned seats that never change
58 is arranged so students can work in small groups

Q. A good advisor shows concern for my feelings by
59 asking how I am feeling
60 noticing when I am acting upset
61 finding time to talk to me
62 not laughing at my problems

R A good advisement class for me has
63 mostly teacher led discussion times
64 lots of films to watch and discuss
65 things to make or do
66 activities that require paper and pencil

S A good advisor would go out of his/her way to help me
67 understand my work
68 if I'm in discipline trouble with the office
69 by talking to another teacher for me
70 by sticking up for me in a parent-teacher conference

T A good advisor
71 likes advisement
72 likes being with students
73 shows enthusiasm
74 thinks advisement is important

U A good advisor
75 is someone you can trust with a secret
76 is someone you can joke around with
77 is someone you can tell how you really feel
78 is someone you can find if you need to talk

V A good advisor
79 is flexible (able to change plans)
80 shares information about him/herself
81 never gets angry
82 is intelligent (smart)

W A good advisor
83 feels good about him/herself
84 has a positive attitude
85 has a sense of humor
86 has a caring attitude

X A good advisor
87 lets us work in small groups
88 plans lots of different kinds of activities for advisory
89 teaches advisory lessons on topics like dealing with peer pressure learning how to solve problems and getting along with friends
90 lets students bring up topics for discussion

Y A good advisor
91 shows respect for all students and their opinions
92 does things with students after school (like chaperoning school activities sponsoring sports or clubs etc)
93 compliments students when they do something well
94 regularly discusses students' grades with them

Z How long does it take you to trust a good advisor enough to confide in him or her?
95 one or two weeks
96 one or two months
97 half the school year(Sept Jan)
98 I probably wouldn t confide in an advisor even after one whole school year

AA In my middle school I have had a good advisor
99 yes
100 no

PLEASE WRITE YOUR ANSWER TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ON THIS PAPER

A good advisor for me is one who_____

_____

_____

_____

Someone at this school who is a great advisor is

_____
advisor's name

THANKS FOR SHARING YOUR IDEAS BY COMPLETING THIS SURVEY PLEASE KEEP THE PENCIL YOU USED TODAY

APPENDIX C

TEACHER SURVEY OF EFFECTIVE TEACHERS AS ADVISORS

This survey is designed to get your opinion about what you think makes a teacher effective as an advisor to middle level students In this survey an effective advisor is defined as a teacher who can build positive relationships with advisees

I appreciate your taking time from your busy schedule to complete this survey Similar information will be collected at eight other model middle schools throughout the state of Florida and the results will be compiled and shared in a doctoral dissertation for the University of Florida and also perhaps in presentations for middle school teachers Thank you for your input.

DIRECTIONS For questions H X please mark the one answer that you think is most important in building an effective advisory relationship with students. There are no correct or incorrect opinions

TEACHER INFORMATION

A Grade(s) taught this school year
1 6th
2. 7th
3 8th
4 other-5th, 9th _____

B Subject(s) taught this school year
5 Language Arts
6 Mathematics
7 Reading
8 Science
9 Social Studies
10 Vocation (Home Ec , Shop Business etc)
11 Fine Arts (art music drama foreign language etc)
12 Physical Education
13 Remedial (DropOut Prevention Comp Classes etc)
14 Other _____

C Gender
15 Female
16 Male

D Ethnicity
17 Asian
18 Black
19 Hispanic
20 White
21 Other

E College Teacher Training
22 Mostly secondary education courses
23 Mostly elementary education courses
24 Mostly middle/jr high education courses

F Highest Degree Earned
25 Bachelor s
26 Master s
27 Specialist
28 Doctorate

G Number of years as a teacher advisor
29 One
30 Two-three
32 Four-five
33 Six or more years

EFFECTIVE ADVISOR INFORMATION

H It is most important for an effective advisor to be
34 young (less than 30 years old)
35 handsome or pretty
36 up to-date in thinking and acting
37 caring and concerned about students

I An effective advisor makes students feel special by
38 listening to what students say
39 respecting everyone s opinion
40 noticing when students behave well
41 noticing when students seem sad or upset

J An effective advisor finds time to talk to students
42 privately
43 in small groups
44 in class discussions
45 outside of advisement class

K. An effective advisor remembers special events like a student s birthday by
46 singing "Happy Birthday" in advisement
47 quietly giving a student a card
48 having a birthday party
49 not embarressing the student by mentioning a birthdey

L An effective advisor plans for advisement class by
50 letting students do whatever they want during advisory
51 students and advisor planning together for many advisement activities
52 letting students plan some advisement activities
53 planning and having all advisement lessons ready

M When a student has a problem an effective advisor
54 refers the student to the counselor
55 tells the student how to handle the problem
56 helps the students think through some possible ways to handle the problem
57 tells the student how he/she handled a simular problem at this age

N An effective advisor
58 treats everyone fairly and equally
59 never gives a discipline referral during advisement
60 expects all students to follow certain rules
61 makes sure everyone feels safe and comfortable

O A good advisement class should have
62 mostly teacher-led discussions
63 lots of films to watch and talk about
64 things to make or do
65 paper-pencil activities

P An effective advisor would go out of his/her way to help a student
66 understand his/her schoolwork
67 if the student were in discipline trouble with the office
68 by talking to another teacher for the student
69 by sticking up for the student in a parent-teacher conference

Q An effective advisor
70 likes advisement
71 likes being with students
72 shows enthusiasm
73 thinks advisement is important

R In my opinion, students think a good advisor is one who
74 they can trust with a secret
75 they can joke around with
76 they can tell how they really feel
77 is available before/after school to talk with

S An effective advisor
78 is flexible (able to change plans)
79 shares information about him/herself
80 never gets angry
81 is intelligent

T An effective advisor
82 feels good about her/himself
83 has a sense of humor
84 has a positive attitude
85 shows he/she cares

U An effective advisor
86 lets students work in small groups
87 plans lots of different kinds of activities for advisory
88 teaches advisory lessons on topics like learning how to solve problems and others
89 encourages students to bring up topics for discussion

V An effective advisor
90 shows respect for all students and their opinions
91 does things with students after school like chaperoning school activities sponsoring sports or clubs
92 compliments students when they do something well
93 regularly discusses students academic progress with them

W An effective advisor can form positive relationships with most of her/his advisees
94 within one to two weeks
95 within one to two months
96 within one semester
97 by the end of the school year

X. I would rate myself as an advisor as
98 excellent
99 average
100 poor

PLEASE WRITE YOUR ANSWER TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS

My definition of an effective advisor is one who_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ABOUT ADVISORS OR ADVISEMENT

THANKS FOR SHARING YOUR IDEAS BY COMPLETING THIS SURVEY

APPENDIX D

STUDENT INTERVIEW INTRODUCTION

Today I would like to find out what you think makes a good teacher-advisor. At your school advisement is called_____. If you thought over the things that have happened in your _____ classes you could tell me some things about your advisors that helped you have a good relationship with that advisor or what you would have liked to have had happen to make your relationship with your advisor be more positive.

I am interested in your thoughts, feelings and opinions about effective teacher-advisors. There are no right or wrong answers. And I want to hear from everyone in our group today.

You were chosen to be part of this group because you are a student who is representative of your school and its students. What you say today may be what other students like you would have said if they were here with us.

I would like to tape record this session so that I can be sure to have a record of what everyone says. Does anyone have a problem with the tape recorder going? We can listen to a part of it when we finish if you would like. I will also be taking some short notes during our session as a reminder to myself.

What is said here today will be kept private What you say will be combined with information from students at other middle schools around the state before anything is shared with other people in a dissertation report

I really appreciate you agreeing to help me with this project Are there any questions before we begin?

Your name is on the card in front of you so that I know who you are but so that the tape recorder knows who is talking it is important for you to try to remember to say your name before you say what you want to say It will seem strange at first to say your name so I'll try to remind you

OK? Let s begin

APPENDIX E

STUDENT INTERVIEW PROBES

1 What are some of the things that middle school teacher-advisors do that you like?

2 What are the things that middle school teacher-advisors do that you do not like?

3 How does a good advisor show his or her concern about you?

4 What kind of a relationship does a good advisor have with advisees? How does the advisor build a good relationship with students?

5 How does a good advisor show he or she understands students?

6 How does a good advisor get the students involved in advisement?

7 How does a good advisor demonstrate that each student is important to him/her?

8 What does a good advisor do when a student comes to the advisor with a problem?

9 Tell me about advisement activities in a good advisor's class

10 How does a good advisor get to really know students?

11 In what ways does a good advisor help students?

12 How does the good advisor control behavior during advisement?

13 How do students know when an advisor likes them?

14 How does a good advisor look?

15 How does a good advisor act?

16 How do you know a good advisor from a poor advisor?

17 If you could design the "perfect advisor" what would be the most important characteristics of your advisor?

18 Have you ever had an advisor you thought was terrific? What was it that made this advisor so great?

19 If someone wanted to be a significant person (an important adult friend) in your life what would he/she need to be like? to do? to say?

20 What does a good advisor do to help you trust him or her?

21 Is the good advisor's classroom any different from other classrooms? How?

22 What makes you feel "connected" with this person who is a good advisor? How long did it take for you to feel connected?

23 What kinds of things does a good advisor say to students? Can you give me some examples?

24 How does a good advisor handle a student who doesn't want to participate in advisement?

25 How does the good advisor deal with conflict or put downs if they occur in advisement?

26 Does a good advisor enjoy being with kids? How do you know this?

27 Should an advisor be a good role model for you when you become an adult? In what ways?

28 Advisement is supposed to help create positive relationships between an advisor and his/her student advisees. What does that mean to you?

29 Does a good advisor do things with advisees at times other than during advisement class? If yes, what kinds of things?

30 In what ways could an advisor help you to do your best in school?

31 Would a good advisor get involved if you were having trouble with another teacher or with discipline from the office? If yes how would you want the advisor to try to help?

32 What do you think teachers could do to be better advisors for students?

33 What else would you like to tell teachers about being good advisors for students?

34 Is there anything else you would like to say about advisement or advisors?

35 I would like to interview a teacher at this school that students think is an effective advisor Do you have any suggestions? Tell me what you think makes this teacher a good advisor

APPENDIX F

TEACHER INTERVIEW INTRODUCTION

I want to thank you for taking time to meet with me today. Did you know that the students selected you as one of the teachers at this school who is an effective advisor? That is something to be proud of!

I am doing a research study to find out what students and teachers think make an advisor effective with middle schoolers. This research will result in a doctoral dissertation and perhaps the information will be used in presentations for middle school teachers. I am interviewing students and teachers at eight of the Model Advisement Schools in Florida. The information collected from the people at all of these schools will be combined before it is reported. Confidentiality of participants will be protected by not using any teacher or school names in reports of the findings.

I would like your written permission to conduct this interview and also to audio tape record it. Recording this session will help me to be sure that I gather all of the information and that it is correct. The tapes will not be shared with anyone at this school and will remain confidential. The tapes will be transcribed by my secretary and then kept in a locked file until the report is completed at which time the tapes will be destroyed.

Do you have any questions or concerns about this interviewing process? From what the students have said I am sure this will be a great interview. Thanks for coming. Let's get started.

APPENDIX G

TEACHER INTERVIEW PROBES

1 Congratulations! Students at this school have chosen you as one of the teachers that they think is a good advisor. Could you please tell me about your relationship with your advisees?

2 What works for you in building positive relationships with your middle school advisees?

3 Do all students seem to need the same types of attention from their advisor? Like what? How are advisees similar and different in their needs?

4 Are the characteristics for effective advising the same as for effective classroom teaching? How are they the same, and how are they different?

5 If a new teacher joined your team what would you tell him/her about the role of teacher advisor?

6 Did you have any specific training for your role as an advisor? What was helpful? What training would you have liked to have had?

7 What kinds of activities do you do in your advisement class? How are the activities planned?

8 Describe an ideal advisement group

9 If you were free to choose everything about advisement, like your advisees, the time of day, length of advisement time, budget, activities what would your advisement be like?

10 Do you get involved with students outside of advisement class time? In what ways?

11 How do you assist children in reaching their academic potential?

12 Do you become involved if a student is having discipline problems in another teacher's class or with the office? If so how do you attempt to help the student?

13 Do you have contact with your advisees parents or guardians? What types of contact have been most effective?

14 What kinds of communication do you find work best with your advisees such as written verbal tactile private small group after class after/before school during your planning time?

15 In what ways do you try to make each advisee feel like he/she is special and important to you?

16 What do you think teachers could do to be more effective advisors for students?

17 Do you think advisement should be a continuing priority in middle school? Why or why not?

18 How could administrators and/or counselors help teachers do a better job as advisors?

19 Are the characteristics that make teachers effective advisors inborn or can they be learned? If they can be learned how do you think teachers can be motivated to try to learn them?

20 What do you think is the most important thing (skill characteristic or whatever) in being successful as an advisor?

21 Are there any developmental needs of middle schoolers that you address through your advisement class? How do you address these student developmental needs?

22 Is there anything else you would like to share about being an effective advisor for middle schoolers? or about advisement in general? or about middle school students as advisees?

APPENDIX H

STUDENT/PARENT INFORMED CONSENT

Dear Student and Parent

I am University of Florida student working on a dissertation regarding student and teacher views of what makes a middle school teacher an effective advisor for students I am also a middle school guidance counselor and advisement coordinator at a middle school in New Smyrna Beach, Florida

In order to find out what students' views are about effective teacher advisors I would like to interview approximately 15 students from your middle school The interviews will be in small groups of three to five students and will take approximately one class period Participation or non-participation will have no affect on student grades Students who participate will be excused by the teacher and principal from their classwork during the interviewing time Non-participating students will remain in their regularly scheduled classes There will be no monetary compensation for participants Students will not be required to answer any question they do not want to answer and they can withdraw from the study at any time

I will also be interviewing students and teachers at several other middle schools which have been chosen by the state of Florida as

Model Advisement Schools. Student interviews will be audio tape recorded. Only first names of students will be used on the tapes. Tapes will be transcribed by my secretary and then kept in a locked filing cabinet until the research paper is completed at which time the tapes will be destroyed. The confidentiality of all students participating in this study will be protected by not using the names of students in any research reports and by combining the information gained from the interviews at this middle school with information from students at other schools before any information is shared. All research procedures will follow professional and ethical research standards.

If you have any questions regarding this study, please contact me at the school. If I am unavailable at the time you call, the advisement coordinator at your middle school is familiar with the study and could probably answer most questions.

I would appreciate the opportunity to learn about your child's views regarding advisement and hope that you will return this signed form to the school tomorrow. Please keep the second copy of this form and return only the signed copy to the school. I look forward to your child's participation. As a representative of this middle school, his/her views are of great interest to me.

Sincerely,

DonnaLee Bushnell

I have read and I understand the procedure described above I agree to participate or agree to allow my child to participate in this study and I have received a copy of this form

_____ Grade 6 7 8

Student Signature

_____

Parent/Guardian Signature Date_____

_____ Date_____

2nd Parent or Witness

APPENDIX I

TEACHER INFORMED CONSENT

Dear Middle School Teacher,

I am a University of Florida student working on a doctoral dissertation regarding student and teacher views of what makes a middle school teacher an effective advisor for middle school students. I am also a middle school counselor and advisement coordinator at New Smyrna Beach Middle School.

In order to determine the views of teachers who are effective advisors, I would like to interview you. The students at your school have indicated that you are one of the teachers that they consider to be a good advisor and so I would like to learn more about you as an advisor.

The interview will be audio tape recorded and will probably last approximately 30-45 minutes. The tape will not be shared with anyone at this school. The confidentiality of all participants will be protected by not using your name in any of the research reporting. Information gained from the interview(s) at this middle school will be combined with information from teachers at other model advisement schools before any information is shared. Tapes and transcripts of this interview will be kept in a locked file cabinet until the research reports are completed and then

will be destroyed. All research procedures will follow professional and ethical research standards.

If you have any questions regarding this study, please feel free to ask me. If I am unavailable, the advisement coordinator at your middle school is familiar with the study and could probably answer most questions.

I would appreciate the opportunity to learn about your views regarding advisement and the advisory role. I look forward to your participation in this study. Your views are of great interest to me.

Sincerely,

DonnaLee Bushnell

I have read and I understand the procedure described above. I agree to participate in this study and I have received a copy of this form.

_____ Date_____

Teacher-Advisor Signature

APPENDIX J

MODEL ADVISEMENT SCHOOL PARTICIPATION QUESTIONNAIRE

To Principal and Advisement Coordinator
Florida Model Advisement School

From DonnaLee Bushnell Advisement Facilitator
New Smyrna Beach Middle School
Doctoral student University of Florida

Date December 17, 1990

Re Advisement Research

Dear Principal and Advisement Coordinator

Congratulations on being selected as a Model Advisement School I know that this role is an honor and also a heavy responsibility As a doctoral student at the University of Florida, I am presently beginning dissertation research on advisement and working under the direct supervision of Dr Paul George The focus of this research is to determine teacher and student views of what makes an advisor effective

The purpose of this letter is to request your assistance I would like to conduct this study at the schools chosen as Model Advisement Middle Schools by the Florida Department of Education because I am sure that these students have had the advantage of having had effective advisors Your cooperation and assistance will be needed to carry out the following components at each model school

1 Descriptive information of your advisement program and its organization, as well as demographic information about your school.

2 Approximately 60 to 100 students who are representative of your school population, to complete a short survey form. This should require no more than one class period.

3 Approximately 15 to30 students, who are representative of your school population, to participate in small group (3-5 students) semi-structured interviews.

4 Three teams of teachers, who are advisors, to complete a short survey.

5 One or two teachers, who the students identify as effective advisors, who would be willing to be interviewed.

I would visit your school sometime between January and June to complete this study. I would also need your assistance to obtain parental permission for students to participate in this study. Neither students or teachers will be personally identified in any written products regarding this research.

I am looking forward to your school's participation in this study and I am anxious to have the opportunity to visit your campus. I anticipate that this project will provide much valuable new information which will help all of us in our roles as Model Advisement Schools. Please complete the attached questionnaire and return it to me at your earliest convenience.

With sincerest thanks,

DonneLee Bushnell

I. _____

School Name

_____

Name and position of person completing form

_____Yes our school would be willing to participate in this research project (If yes please go to Section II next)

_____No our school would not be willing to participate because

_____

_____Maybe our school would be willing to participate but

a. _____we need more information

b _____we must obtain permission to participate from district level You need to contact

c _____other please explain

II

A School address_____

_____

B Principal_____

Advisement Coordinator_____

Other contact person_____

Please * the preferred contact person

C Days of the week most convenient for researcher visit M T W TH F Any

D Dates when school is not in session _____

E Summer dismissal is June_____

F _____Information will be mailed in the attached envelope regarding

1 Description of your advisement program such as organization days time how advisors and advisees are match what staff are advisors, how long advisors remain matched with same advisees etc

2 Demographic information about your school such as size location grade levels ethnic socioeconomic make up, classroom and team organization etc

____No this information is not readily available. We would prefer to provide this information in

_____a telephone conversation

_____written survey form

_____when you visit our school

Thanks so much for your help and cooperation See you soon

APPENDIX K

CONFIRMATION LETTER

May 13 1991

Mrs. , Advisement Coordinator
_____ Middle School
_____
_____

Dear

Thank you for your assistance in arranging for my visit to your school on May 21, 1991. Enclosed are the interviewing permission slips which the students and parents need to sign in advance. I would appreciate you distributing these to students that you think would be interested in spending approximately 45 minutes in a small group (3-5 students) interview. I need for the students to be representative of your school population in terms of race, gender, socioeconomic status (as measured by percentage of free/reduced lunches), and academic achievement (as reflected on report cards or placement in homogeneous math levels). I would like to interview approximately 15 students but have included thirty permission forms which allows for some students that do not return the signed consent. The other necessity is a room where interviewing can take place. I certainly appreciate your help and cooperation in arranging for all the components of this research study.

As a reminder, the four components of this research project are

1 Survey with one sixth seventh and eighth grade advisement class approximetely 30 minutes in a large room such as cafeteria or auditorium or whatever can be arranged

2 Survey of one sixth, seventh and eighth grade team of teachers approximetely 20 minutes required-this may be completed at any time during the day-these are enclosed also

3 Interviews with small groups of students-representative of school population-approximately 45 minutes-need quiet room for tape recording

4 Individual interviews with two teachers who are identified by the students as effective advisors-45 minutes quiet room

I am most grateful for all the assistence you have provided which will allow me to complete this research project. If you or the parents have any questions or concerns please feel free to call me at either of the phone numbers below

It is anticipated that in the early fall you will receive a preliminary written report of the findings of this study regarding what makes teachers effective advisors from the students' and teachers' perspective It will condense the findings from all the model schools studied I hope that the findings will be helpful and informative to you in your advisement program

Thank you,

DonnaLee Bushnell

APPENDIX L

MODEL ADVISEMENT SCHOOL DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1 SCHOOL

2. LOCATION

3. TOTAL # OF STUDENTS

4 STUDENT RACIAL BACKGROUND _____WHITE _____BLACK

_____HISPANIC _____ASIAN _____OTHER

5 % OF STUDENTS ON FREE/REDUCED LUNCHES _____

ADVISEMENT INFORMATION

6 # OF YEARS DOING ADVISEMENT _____

7 # OF YEARS AS A MODEL _____

8 # OF DAYS PER WEEK OF ADVISEMENT _____

9 # OF MINUTES PER DAY OF ADVISEMENT _____

10 ADVISEMENT CLASSES HETEROGENEOUSLY GROUPED YES NO

11 ACADEMIC CLASSES HETEROGENEOUSLY GROUPED YES NO SOME

12 HOW ARE ADVISORS AND ADVISEES MATCHED _____

_____

13 ADVISOR TO ADVISEE RATIO 1 TO _____

14 STUDENTS HAVE SAME ADVISOR FOR _____YEARS

15 WHICH TEACHERS SERVE AS ADVISORS ACADEMIC ELECTIVE PE ADMINISTRATORS COUNSELORS MEDIA SPECIAL ED , CLERICAL/CUSTODIAL STAFF OTHER_____

16 NAME OF ADVISEMENT PROGRAM _____

17 TWO TEACHERS THAT YOU WOULD RECOMMEND AS EFFECTIVE ADVISORS

A.

B.

18 PLEASE ADD ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ABOUT YOUR SCHOOLS ADVISEMENT PROGRAM THANKS

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

DonnaLee Brown Bushnell was born in New York state on March 16, 1945. She attended elementary school in Buffalo, New York, and graduated in 1962 from Dixie Hollins High School in St. Petersburg, Florida. She attend St. Petersburg Junior College, the University of Texas and graduated in 1972 with a Bachelor of Arts in elementary and early childhood education from Stetson University in DeLand, Florida. Her Master of Education degree was also from Stetson University in the field of guidance and counseling in 1979. She received her Specialist in Education from the Department of Educational Leadership at the University of Florida in 1988.

DonnaLee has been an educator in the Volusia County, Florida public schools for the past 20 years. She taught kindergarten for 10 years, served as an elementary school counselor for four years, and has been a middle school counselor for six years. For the past two years she has served as a coordinator and facilitator of a Model Middle School Advisement grant sponsored by the state of Florida.

In 1988, DonnaLee was named by the Florida School Counselor Association as Middle School Counselor of the Year. In 1989 she was runner-up for the American School Counselor of the Year Award. Also in 1989, she was a member of the middle school guidance department that was named Guidance Department of the Year for the state. She has published several

book reviews in the National Middle School Association Journal She has also written several grants that have resulted in more than $200,000 in added funds for her school

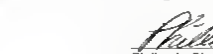
She is a member of many professional organizations including Phi Delta Kappa Alpha Delta Kappa, Phi Kappa Phi Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development National Middle School Association Florida League of Middle Schools, Florida Association of Counseling and Development, Volusia-Flagler Association of Counseling and Development, and Constituency for Children

DonnaLee is the proud wife of Jay Richard Bushnell an instructor at Daytona Beach Community College and also a doctoral student at the University of Florida. They have two sons Sgt. Brant C Bushnell U S Air Force Airman of the Year 1990 and Jason C Bushnell, a senior at the University of South Florida.

I certify I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate in scope and quality as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Education

Paul S George Chair
Professor of Educational Leadership

I certify I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate in scope and quality as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Education



Phillip A Clark
Professor of Educational Leadership

I certify I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate in scope and quality as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Education

Joan L Curcio
Associate Professor of Educational Leadership

I certify I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate in scope and quality as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Education

Robert R. Sherman

Robert R. Sherman
Professor of Foundations of Education

This dissertation was submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the College of Education and to the Graduate School and was accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education

December 1991

David B. Smith

Dean, College of Education

Dean, Graduate School